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Inflation
THE WRONG MEDICINE **Peter L. Bernstein**

That Cheap Flight to Rome
WHO SETS THE PLANE FARES?
K. G. J. Pillai

Nixspeak
RHETORIC OF OPPOSITES **Lynn Hinds & Carolyn Smith**

EDUCATION CRITICS
Ivor Kraft

HART CRANE
Alan Trachtenberg

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LETTERS

conspiracy to entice

Champaign, Ill.

Dear Sirs: Government figures show that, on an average, every ten minutes a GI deserts and every three minutes one goes AWOL [*The New York Times*, Mar. 6, 1969]. Many thousands of Americans have been involved in helping these young men to find alternatives to the dilemma in which military service has placed them. . . .

In January 1969 Jim Hayes was indicted in Boston for "enticing and procuring" a GI to desert. Now another federal grand jury, sitting in East St. Louis, Ill., on Dec. 10, 1969 indicted Laurie McCarthy, Jocelyn Werry and Steve Schmidt for (*1*) enticing and procuring; (*2*) aiding and assisting; (*3*) conspiracy. Overt acts cited in the conspiracy charge include giving money and shelter. This is the first conspiracy charge in a desertion case.

Laurie McCarthy is an honor student and secretary of the University of Illinois Undergraduate Student Association. Jocelyn Werry is a faculty wife and mother of five children. Steve Schmidt is a former draft counselor now serving a three-year sentence for induction refusal.

The outcome of the case is of great importance. The government will be watching closely to see how people respond. The trial is being held in Danville, Ill., where the government has a sympathetic judge and can count on an equally sympathetic jury. . . . Checks in support of the indicted should be sent to Champaign-Urbana Legal Defense Fund, P.O. Box 2867 Sta. A., Champaign, Ill., 61820.

Staughton Lynd

who shall live?

Toronto, Canada

Dear Sirs: Your editorial "Move Abroad and Live" [Jan. 26] seems to confuse the issues of cost to the individual and cost to society, using renal dialysis as an example, and to assume that countries with socialized medicine do not have a problem in this respect. Canada does have socialized medicine, and I should like to show you what it looks like from the inside.

Last year I served on the Task Force on Hospital Beds and Facilities of the Department of National Health and Welfare, and we adopted the following unexceptionable recommendation on renal dialysis:

> That dialysis centres be established in hospitals and metropolitan areas where the caseload can justify an active nephrology service, such dialysis centres to be articulated in all instances with a renal transplantation centre in a major metropolitan area.

With all the good will in the world, putting this into effect is not easy. There are not enough trained personnel and facilities, and setting up a ten-bed chronic dialysis unit would cost nearly $300,000 for facilities and equipment and another $100,000 or more to recruit and train staff. After that, maintaining the patient would cost $10,000 to $15,000 per year. Even a home dialysis program would cost $5,000 to $7,000 per year, plus the cost of the unit, the cost of training members of the family to use it, and the cost of hospital facilities that would have to be called on from time to time.

Each person receiving this treatment, now and in the future, does not have to pay for it out of pocket because of the provincial hospital programs. That solves the personal financial problem. But the five-year survival rate for patients on chronic dialysis is about 75 per cent, with roughly 5 per cent dying each year, and until it becomes feasible to provide all the survivors with kidney trans-

(Continued on page 180)

EDITORIALS

The Prestidigitator

By all the available evidence, Richard M. Nixon will never inspire the nation to great deeds, nor formulate principles to excite the admiration of mankind. But if in these respects he falls short of at least some of his illustrious predecessors, in one particular he excels them all. Not one can approach him as a political conjurer.

In this realm, so important to politicians, Mr. Nixon has proved himself with his "plan" for ending the Vietnamese War "honorably." Vietnamization is the gimmick and what a gimmick it is! Never has more ambiguity been crowded into six syllables. The fact that it can mean anything the President wants it to mean is its cardinal virtue. It enables him to maintain a "low profile"—one of his favorite phrases—an almost invisible target that can move forward, sideways, backwards, and never stand on anything.

Vietnamization means, we are told, that we shall withdraw all combat troops, but whether that means ground combat troops alone, or Air Force crews and individual fliers as well, Mr. Nixon has never said. The point is important, for without American air power, which has been responsible for the bulk of casualties, both among the Vietcong and North Vietnamese combat forces and the South Vietnamese civilians, the Saigon government's armed forces would have little chance against their opponents.

Further, the President has said that his plan is "irreversible," thus assuring the American people that we are pulling out of a war which most of them detest. But the President has also said that if the enemy takes advantage of his efforts to end the fighting, he will punish them with steely determination. Here is no supine Chief Executive who will cut and run—never will he compromise the goal of the South Vietnamese people democratically to decide their own destiny, which will be defined for them by President Thieu, designated by Mr. Nixon himself as among the six foremost statesmen in the world. Thus the hopeful among the domestic doves, and the hopeful among the remaining hawks, will alike be satisfied—at least for a time.

Nor has Mr. Nixon told us when those undesignated troops will be withdrawn. What! Should he be asked to inform the enemy of his design, and jeopardize the lives of American boys? Besides, his master timetable is necessarily contingent on circumstances beyond his control, and particularly on the actions of the enemy, who treacherously invaded his own country and forced America and its allies (expensively purchased, most of them) to pockmark the country with bomb craters, herd the freedom-loving peasants into refugee camps, and from time to time massacre the inhabitants of a village to teach the others that Uncle Sam is not to be trifled with when he crusades for freedom.

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Still maintaining his low profile, Mr. Nixon has been careful not to leave himself open to political attack, should Vietnamization prove unsuccessful. No one in the Nixon Administration has said that it will work. They tout it like a patent medicine on radio/TV—it won't necessarily cure your headache (you might have a brain tumor), but if your problem is nerves, this nostrum will make you feel better. Using a similar technique, Mr. Nixon's experts in persuasion tout Vietnamization, plant spies among the war correspondents and, with Mr. Agnew pistol-whipping the media, make sure of a good press.

If Vietnamization fails to work, it will not be for lack of manpower. Thieu and his subordinate generals now have a million men under arms—about one out of every six male adults. This force, large absolutely and enormous relative to a total population so small, is assured of lavish American logistical support for a period which Mr. Nixon has likewise left indefinite. If Vietnamization lags, Thieu's cries for more arms and more money will become ever more vociferous. And he will get them, for Vietnamization is the only card in Mr. Nixon's hand.

Another virtue—to the President—of this facsimile of a policy is that it has diverted public attention almost completely from the peace negotiations in Paris. Were Mr. Nixon to take these talks seriously, he might actually end the war, but perhaps on terms that would enrage his hawkish followers. He has avoided that peril. As long as the weekly death toll of American troops can be kept below 100, it is hoped that the American public will not rise against Mr. Nixon, as it did against his predecessor. If his aim is to drag out the war indefinitely, and end up with a firm American foothold in Vietnam, success is not precluded. Success (and honor) will be measured by retention of American bases, owned, of course, by the Thieu government, or another of the same type, with American tenants. As in Thailand.

So far, then, Vietnamization has served Mr. Nixon well. Since his November 3 speech criticism has been muted. Only now is the Senate Foreign Relations Committee returning to the fray, and that without fanfare. And yet an uneasy feeling must sometimes intrude on the President's hours of rest. Can a plan so devoid of content succeed in the longer perspective of an unpopular war? Even with the marvels of modern communication, can a skillful operator fool all of the people all the time?

Coordinating the Media

In our issue of February 9 we called attention to the dragnet subpoenas that had been served on C.B.S. News ("Informing by Compulsion"), pointed to the dangerous implications, and said that a major issue was in the making. Two developments underscore the danger and suggest that a larger strategy is involved. It now appears that the unedited files of *Time*, *Life* and *Newsweek*, dealing with the Weather-

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man faction of SDS, were subpoenaed shortly after the disturbances in Chicago, although the fact itself was not disclosed until February 2. *Time* and *Life*, while expressing concern, apparently complied with the subpoena, whereas *Newsweek* still hopes to work out an informal agreement that would at least delete the names of confidential sources.

In the wake of this disclosure, Earl Caldwell, of the San Francisco Bureau of *The New York Times*, received a similar subpoena issued by a federal grand jury investigating the Panthers. In this instance, the *Times* states that it will provide all possible assistance to Mr. Caldwell and the attorneys he has retained, and calls attention to the dangers to a free press implicit in the action. At the same time, twenty-three of thirty-three general reporters at *The Wall Street Journal* have denounced such subpoenas as "a dangerous device which could be used to make us betray virtually any source in the future." Emboldened by these developments, C.B.S. has said that it will contest the power to issue such dragnet subpoenas "as appropriate cases are presented."

The other development occurred in Saigon, where it was disclosed that four government intelligence agents had managed to obtain press credentials. Department of Defense explanations of this action are, in the words of *The New York Times*, "confused, incomplete and evasive." To which we would add: "preposterous." By clear inference these press credentials were issued for the purpose of enabling government agents to investigate possible news leaks and related matters. "Blowing the cover" of the agents will not correct the situation; the press now knows—as it probably knew all along—that it is under close scrutiny.

These actions are not isolated. They should be seen as part of a calculated effort to dominate the media. As Senator Harold E. Hughes puts it: "First you pistol-whip the mass media, and then you commandeer it for political purposes." The commandeering phase is now well under way. President Nixon has been making increased use of television for both press conferences and nationwide addresses; this, as Senator Muskie notes, builds momentum on an issue to a degree that puts opposition elements in the Congress at a distinct disadvantage.

At its best, a press conference, televised or not, provides the reporters with leads and official statements which can then be analyzed and investigated. Like any briefing, it is an adjunct to getting the news, as well, of course, as being an original source of news. But any President can use a press conference for his own ends and only incidentally as a means of briefing. One way is to schedule irregular and infrequent press conferences when it suits the President's purposes and when he has a point or points he wants to make. The more infrequent the conferences, the easier it is for the President to dominate them. Under Mr. Nixon such meetings are consciously used as a way not so much to manipulate opinion as to get the jump on the press and, in effect, by-pass it. With the networks being extremely cautious about "instant analysis," he can secure lead-time on an issue which leaves press and opposition far behind.

What these developments mean is that the media are being coordinated, that is, made to serve as an arm of the military in Vietnam, of the Department of Justice in San Francisco and Chicago and, nationally, as a political instrumentality of Presidential power and purpose. It is ironic that a President who once hysterically blamed the press for the political defeat he had suffered in California should now have learned how to bend it to his ends. That the Administration has since moved to what is described as a "conciliatory posture" on the subpoena issue should not obscure the need to convert the newsmen's inchoate claim to privilege on certain communications into a formally sanctioned right. At the same time, the President's opposition—if it exists—must come alive and alertly insist on its right to equal time and access to the public mind.

Bottom of the Barrel

There is something very wrong with the criteria whereby the Senate measures a candidate for the Supreme Court. The viewpoint is altogether too negative. The legislators behave as though they believed that, if they cannot prove that the nominee robbed a bank or smuggled heroin, they must confirm him.

The frame of reference should be much broader and it should emphasize the positive qualities of the nominee. The Senate should ask itself what strength of character or attainment the candidate might bring to the United States Supreme Court. Thus evaluated, what chance would Judge Carswell have?

The discrepancy between what is and what should be has been emphasized by Sen. William Proxmire and Rep. Richard McCarthy—both being among our most distinguished legislators. As Proxmire says, the Supreme Court is "the final repository of knowledge when it comes to interpreting the Constitution of the United States." The Supreme Court is a coordinate branch of government, with only nine members, as against 535 members of Congress. Yet on occasion the Court can overrule both the President and the Congress. McCarthy adds that, since we do not elect the Supreme Court, the hearings on confirmation are the only chance the Senate, and the citizens, have to voice their displeasure. These are life appointments, and once the man is confirmed he must be guilty of malfeasance, or at least grave indiscretion, before correction is possible. History shows how rarely this remedy can be applied.

Carswell's nomination should be rejected, but probably he will be confirmed. Everyone is a bit bruised from the Haynsworth fight, and the Senate will be reluctant to reject two Nixon nominations in succession. Carswell, if confirmed, will be given his seat for the wrong reason, and the right reasons should be kept in mind, in case further appointments should fall to President Nixon's lot.

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Changing Times

The 95-day General Electric strike is over. Both labor and management are out of pocket, but the unions got what they struck for and General Electric has no discernible grounds for consolation. Except possibly that it has learned a lesson.

Time (February 9) spelled out the lesson in a few words. Many of the 130,000 strikers, it said, "were as united in bitterness against their employer as any band of workers who fought the U.S. industrial class wars of the 1930s. Corporations rarely win that kind of struggle today." And *Time* discerned what was pointed out in *Nation* editorials and articles months and years ago (see, for instance, "The Issue is Boulwarism" by B. J. Widick, *The Nation*, November 10, 1969), namely that the stand-pat bargaining technique named after Lemuel Boulware, G.E.'s labor relations potentate of the fifties, can win only Pyrrhic victories. When Boulware was in charge of labor relations, the company's policy was to make a "firm, fair" offer and rely on a public relations campaign to bludgeon the workers into compliance. This time the public relations pounding didn't work.

It was not certain that this would be the outcome. The conservatism of the aging leadership of many unions has been a source of concern for some years, and no one knew how the "new breed" of unionists would react to a prolonged strike; there has been no strike of this size at G.E. since 1946. But the outcome indicates that the new generation is capable of militant strike action. Nor, as *Time* also concedes, is this merely a case of "greedy workers" versus "inflation-fighting" executives. The G.E. workers did not like being treated as children: the issues transcended economics. They were not going to have any more of the Boulware "game theory" of asking the computer for the minimally attractive offer the workers would accept without a strike, or with only half-hearted opposition, and then telling them they could take it or leave it. As a result, workers who had never had experience in a big strike showed unexpected solidarity and militancy.

While it is a good omen, it is not necessarily the end of Boulwarism. If the unions should again split up into factions within the movement and within particular unions, some other vice president will convince his superiors that he can put it over. That is the other moral that can be drawn, and it is one that the victorious unions must not forget.

Politics of Conscience

Rev. Richard John Neuhaus, whose "The Good Sense of Amnesty" appeared in *The Nation* of February 9, has announced that he will challenge the House seat of Democratic incumbent John J. Rooney in Brooklyn's 14th Congressional District. Mr. Rooney, in office since 1944, has a generally liberal record as evaluated by ADA, but he has steadfastly supported government policy on Vietnam.

Mr. Neuhaus' candidacy fits a pattern that has become increasingly familiar in recent years: a man with no previous political experience, backed by a largely volunteer and amateur organization, pits himself against a well-established party candidate on an issue of deep moral consequence. Such challenges are obviously long shots. In the case of Mr. Neuhaus, however, the prospects are more than usually favorable. He was urged to run by Senator McCarthy, and he expects the support of Herman Badillo, Borough President of the Bronx, the New Democratic Coalition, and several community organizations formed originally to advance the campaigns of Senator McCarthy and the late Robert Kennedy.

Furthermore, though Vietnam is the principal issue of difference between Mr. Neuhaus and Mr. Rooney, the challenger is not a one-issue candidate. His church, St. John the Evangelist Lutheran, is located in the Williamsburg section, a predominately ghetto neighborhood, and the pastor has long been active in the area of civil rights. He will accuse his opponent of failing to represent the district's economic interests with sufficient vigor, particularly in the matter of redeveloping the Brooklyn Navy Yard, and looks forward to support from blacks and Puerto Ricans, as well as white liberals.

Meanwhile, Mr. Neuhaus' plea for amnesty is proving to be more than a lonely voice. Rep. Edward J. Koch, recently returned from a visit to draft-resistance centers in Toronto, Montreal and Ottawa (he was told that some 50,000 young Americans have either settled permanently in Canada, or are remaining there for the duration of the war in Vietnam), has a bill pending in Congress to provide selective conscientious objection for those now or previously eligible for the draft. Representative Koch, who acknowledges that debate on the issue will probably be overwrought, seeks nevertheless to open a "rational dialogue" on amnesty. He has discovered already that those who declare themselves unalterably opposed to the idea still respond to the notion that some national service might be required of the returnees—as, for example, working in the ghettos.

Both Representative Koch and Mr. Neuhaus deserve the support of their constituents.

Presbyterians North and South

Early this year, a stranger wishing to worship at the First Presbyterian Church of Sumter, S.C., was in danger of being convicted of disorderly conduct and sentenced to thirty days in jail and a $100 fine. If he was a Negro, that is. Such was the experience of two Negro college students who, trusting in the sign outside the church, "We extend a cordial welcome to you," tried to attend a Sunday service on January 11. The chief of police of Sumter testified that the students were well-dressed and orderly, and carried Bibles, but their entrance was barred by members of the congregation because, as one elder

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explained, "their participation would have created an emotional disturbance."

For their part, the students, Reuben O. Levy, 19, and William O. Vance, 18, testified that the church was nearest to the campus of "predominantly Negro" Morris College, which they attend. Mr. Vance also testified that one church member told him, "No niggers can come in here." The church was in fact all white, and so was the jury. The city prosecutor clinched the case by arguing that "each church has a right to run its own business as it wants."

The Presbyterian Church in the United States is riven. The Southern body, to which the First Presbyterian Church of Sumter belongs, calls itself the Presbyterian Church in the United States; the Northern congregations are organized into the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. The attitude of some of the Northern churches contrasts with that which predominates in their Southern counterparts. In New York City the Good Shepherd Faith Presbyterian Church, together with St. Mark's in the Bowery (Episcopal), is trying to put up its building as collateral for bail for the sixteen Black Panthers charged with conspiracy, and Rev. Robert Pierre Johnson, the General Presbyter of the New York Synod, asking for aid in the bail project, said the issue was "the guarantee of freedom for all Americans to be judged innocent until proven guilty." He said "all Americans," not "all white Americans."

Of course not all Northern Presbyterian congregations are so enlightened, nor do all Southern Presbyterian churches bar Negroes. In fact, the First Presbyterian Church of Sumter no longer does so. On Sunday, February 1, evidently by prearrangement, Messrs. Levy and Vance presented themselves, were greeted at the door by ushers, and escorted to the front of the church. Evidently higher authority got into the affair; it may be, also, that liberals in the congregation overruled the racists. If this Christian resolution of the controversy is a sign of the times, the division between the Northern and Southern wings of the Presbyterian Church may yet be healed.

High-Minded and Light-Hearted

J. BRONOWSKI

What made it such a pleasure to spend time with Bertrand Russell was the kindling of his own pleasure as soon as the talk turned to intellectual topics. He was as spontaneously happy in the play of mind as an athlete in his body: there was a grace of style in the way he thought and talked, always pointed straight at the center of the subject, that made all of us younger men envy and imitate him even as we argued. Odd though it sounds, I think Russell's precise and easy directness will turn out to be his most lasting influence in English-speaking philosophy.

He was troubled by the direction philosophy had taken after his attempt, with Whitehead, to find strictly logical foundations for mathematics. Since their monumental attempt in the long run raised more difficulties than it settled, it led (he believed) to a general skepticism about the reach of philosophy that came to prefer more manageable substitutes for it: logical positivism, operationalism and linguistic analysis. Russell had no doubt that philosophy ought to (and could sensibly) discuss the nature of the real world and our perception and conception of it.

And even that was not enough. The most remarkable passages in all three volumes of his *Autobiography* stand on two adjacent pages, on one of which he describes how he was suddenly overwhelmed with an understanding of man's inner loneliness when he saw Mrs. Whitehead in great pain, and on the next recounts his discovery of the paradox of classes which shook (and still quakes) the formal structure of mathematical systems. It was this juxtaposition of involvement that made him a pacifist in the First War, a doubter in the Second, and a frenzied hater of inhuman policies ever since. It also made him the one heroic figure among philosophers in this century.

Russell had not been much of a public figure and protagonist before 1946. In that year he and I came together into the radio Brains Trust of the British Broadcasting Corporation, and discovered the delight and the power of public argument. The evenings that we spent there, on and off the air, are the most high-minded and light-hearted in my memory.

Russell was dry in such discussions—exact, witty, a great tease in leading step by step until one stepped on a prepared mine. He got me into an argument about John Stuart Mill and then, when I pressed the issue, said airily, "Oh, I am prejudiced; you see, he was my godfather." When a fellow philosopher who had written a new book asked him to review it, he said in one of his crackling asides, "No, no, modesty forbids." And he loved to steer into irreverent histories of the bedroom foibles of Victorian worthies, in which he was well informed, because what he hated most in the age in which he grew up was its cruel hypocrisy about sex.

The recollection that I carry with me from those evenings, earnest and fun together, is how single his personality was wherever one probed it; that is what made him so powerful to argue with and to learn from. There were no two ways about Bertrand Russell: he was totally committed to the logical consequences of his convictions in every action. That commitment was often a misery to him in his personal relations, as his *Autobiography* betrays; yet it remains in my conscience now as a model of what a living philosophy should be.

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The Bell System Kids the Press

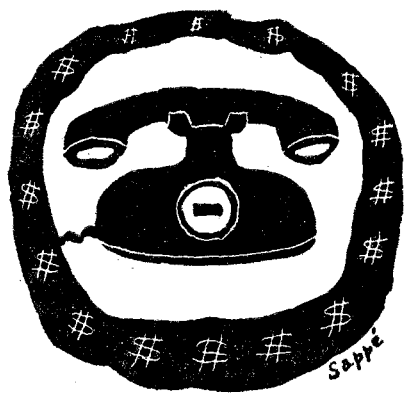
JOSEPH C. GOULDEN
Mr. Goulden, a Washington journalist, is the author of Monopoly, *a critical study of AT&T (Putnam's) and of* Truth Is the First Casualty, *on the Tonkin Gulf incidents, published last year by Rand McNally.*

Arlington, Va.

At 11:30 A.M. on January 14 the reporters who cover the Maryland Statehouse in Annapolis were called to the Public Service Commission to hear an announcement of a $22,768,000 increase in telephone rates. The PSC chairman, William O. Doub, handed them a 34-page order and what was purported to be a "summarizing" press release.

The reporters were chiefly interested in the fact that the new rates for Chesapeake & Potomac Telephone Co.—an AT&T subsidiary—would add from 40c to $1.25 to the monthly bills of 2.2 million Maryland phone subscribers. Doub, however, during forty-five minutes of questioning, emphasized C&P's new "economy rate" of $3.95 to $4.80 monthly for persons of low or fixed income. He praised C&P for initiating this program, first in the nation. He also talked at length about the "expanded calling areas" which suburban residents could dial without paying long-distance tolls. Summarizing, Doub said the rates "represent a complete restructuring of the calling area and the service provided by the company."

John Hanrahan, the *Washington Post*'s Maryland correspondent, recollected later: "Just about everything Doub said stressed the reductions. We were trying to read through those 34 pages of the order during the press conference and ask questions at the



same time. The PSC people told us all the 'items of interest' were covered in the press release."

Later Hanrahan and Martha Angle, the Washington *Star* correspondent, called Fred Langbein, C&P's public relations director. "We wanted to know what the rates were going to mean for the consumer in Bowie and Silver Spring—you know, the local application. We went through the PSC press release in great detail. Then I asked, 'Are there any other items or changes that will apply to a lot of customers?' Langbein told me, 'No, that's it; those are the highlights.' "

Stories in both the *Post* and the *Star* the next day covered just about what was in the press release. So did those of the wire service and television correspondents. The Baltimore papers, the *Sun* and *News-Post*, are on strike.

No reporters who wrote the stories cover the PSC on a regular basis. Hanrahan, for example, also has responsibility for the legislature. And although hearings on the rate increase stretched over fourteen days, "I was able to drop in only a couple of times. There was an awful lot of paper, and I don't pretend to know all the technicalities."

Nonetheless, Hanrahan was surprised when a woman called the *Post*'s state desk on January 20 to describe a peculiar occurrence. A C&P phone operator had told her that under the "new rates" she must pay 25c extra for a credit-card call, and that it would thus be cheaper to dial direct. "I didn't see this in the paper," the woman said. "What is it all about?"

"I couldn't believe it," Hanrahan said, "but she was absolutely right." A check with the PSC brought the admission that the new rate schedule included the following additional "handling charges"—items not discussed in the press release, or at the PSC's press conference, or by press agent Langbein:

¶Sixty-five cents for every person-to-person call.

¶Twenty-five cents for every station-to-station call made through an operator.

¶Twenty-five cents for every call made on a credit card.

¶Twenty-five cents for every "third number" call —say by a businessman who calls long distance from home and charges his office number.

Hanrahan published the story the next morning, and Langbein came to the *Post* at a brisk trot. Not to complain, you understand, just to "set the record straight." He carried a press release he claimed had been sent to "eighty Maryland papers" the day after the PSC decision. This release, he pointed out, did discuss the "handling charges." But since he had talked with Hanrahan and Miss Angle on the phone, he "saw no reason to give it to the *Post* and *Star*."

"It was a peculiar document," Hanrahan commented. "It *was* a thorough press release, but I noticed the date was written in with ink. And it never reached the reporters who cover the PSC. A deliberate deception? I wouldn't charge that outright, but we certainly weren't given a major element of the story."

The *Star*'s Martha Angle was more explicit: "Those sneaky bastards."

The Bell companies in the past have made a prac-

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tice of testing rate gimmicks in selected markets before introducing them nationally. Also, it is stated company policy to discourage citizens from placing calls through operators—and the new "handling charge" fits into a broad strategy. But with AT&T service near total collapse in some areas, a customer uses direct distance dialing at his own financial risk. Further, businessmen (and journalists) who travel use AT&T credit cards as an alternative to keeping a pocketful of dimes. (Depositing coins in most public booths is folly anyway; although AT&T claims to have designed a workable ABM, it still has not produced a vandal-proof booth.)

In short, with the assistance of a utility "regulatory" commission, Bell tried to slip a new customer inconvenience—and price increase—past the Maryland press and public. Statehouse reporters elsewhere should be warned against relying on Bell press agents and Commission press releases for full disclosure in rate cases. With half a billion dollars of such rate increases pending around the country, it's time the press began reading the fine print. □

INFLATION: THE WRONG MEDICINE

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Hang out the flags and sound the klaxons—the Great White Fathers in Washington have brought economic growth in the United States down to zero. It took a lot of pulling and tugging to get us there, but they have finally won. They have administered the classic medicine of higher taxes and tight money and have cooled off the economy. The catalogue of their victories is impressive. Not only is real growth down to zero but unemployment is up, housing is way down, profits are tightly squeezed, the stock market is a shambles, interest rates are at record highs, appropriations for education are curtailed, and even the military is left begging for a few crumbs.

The only trouble is that prices are also up. The cost of living rose 4.6 per cent in 1968 and then, despite the tax surcharge and ever tighter monetary policy, it rose more than 5 per cent in 1969. And there are no meaningful signs of a letup in the inflationary spiral. In recent weeks, prices of steel, copper, aluminum and a variety of chemicals have been increased, to say nothing of transit fares, commuter fares, and state and local property and excise taxes. We were startled back in 1965 when wages started going up by 5 to 6 per cent a year, but now the prevailing rate is closer to 10 per cent.

In short, what doth it profit a man to smash the upward momentum of our great economy if he loseth the battle against inflation? Since we are possibly on the verge of an economic crisis, it is time to rethink policies and to ask whether there is still time for a change. It will not be enough just to reverse the old policies—those who are hesitant on that score have some valid arguments on their side: we also need *new* policies that can overcome inflation without at the same time tearing apart the entire fabric of our prosperity.

The theory behind the classic medicine for the treatment of inflationary diseases is simple and appealing. Prices go up because demand exceeds supply. Reduce demand, therefore, and prices will stop going up. Raise taxes, cut government spending, make business and consumer spending more difficult and expensive to finance. Businessmen will then find that with lower demand they are unable to sell everything they can produce; if they persist in raising prices, their competitors will steal their customers. Thus the overheating in the economy is reduced and the price level flattens out. The whole process is assisted by a slower pace of wage increases, as businessmen become a lot tougher about accepting higher costs when they are unable to pass them along so easily to their customers.

Of course, there are other ways to fight inflation, among them wage and price controls or voluntary guidelines (known as an "incomes policy" in European countries). But such policies, according to advocates of the classic medicine, interfere with the free play of market forces, produce artificial and unfavorable allocations of resources and, since they are difficult to administer, invite violation.

But the trouble with the classic medicine of squeezing down demand is that it too can fail to work as it should. Ultimately, if prices continue to rise in the face of shrinking demands for goods and services, it seems pointless to press so hard on the economy that a depression results. Indeed, the heavy hand of fiscal conservatism and tight money fails on three counts.

First, these policies seem to place little or no restraint on those important sectors of the economy where, as the economists put it, demand is inelastic —that is, where the customer is either determined or forced to keep buying, regardless of price increases. This is particularly the case in the service industries where, because of the high labor content, inflation keeps rolling merrily along no matter what the authorities do about taxes and interest rates. The prices of consumer services other than rent have gone up more than 50 per cent in the past ten years;

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they rose more than 7 per cent in 1969 alone, more than twice as fast as the cost of the goods that consumers buy (wholesale prices, incidentally, are up only 15 per cent in ten years). Subway and commuter fares, haircuts, domestic help, medical care and laundry and cleaning are just a few examples of this phenomenon.

Ironically, the government's cost of living goes up faster than anything else. The prices of goods and services purchased by government are rising about 10 per cent faster than the prices that consumers pay. Civil servants, police, firemen, teachers, garbage collectors, councilmen and Congressmen, and privates and generals are all demanding, and getting, more. No wonder, then, that state and municipal taxes keep going up, or that the President's Spartan budget involves deep cuts in what many people would consider essential federal activities.

The second count on which the classic medicine fails to achieve its objective is in the allocation of resources. Those who believe that higher taxes and tight money leave the operation of free-market forces intact, and that they will therefore emerge

Noonan

from the period of rigor with a more desirable mix of output than they would have under price and wage controls, are looking at the world with blinders. It was not so serious in the mini-money crunch of 1959-60 that housing construction fell off, because housing was not then in short supply. But the supply was growing shorter in 1966 when the industry was felled by a body blow from which it was barely recovering when the haymaker of 1969 was delivered. The housing shortage is now desperate from high-income areas to low, a scandalous blot on a supposedly affluent society. Meanwhile, with inflation pushing wage rates in construction steadily upward—and pushing at the same time on land costs and interest rates—the price of housing is rising at an alarming rate; indeed, the rising cost of this essential item is simply feeding inflationary pressures throughout the rest of the economy.

But it is not only housing that suffers from the classic medicine. If you reduce demand, you ultimately reduce supply. Lower levels of production mean higher unit costs and greater pressure to keep prices up. A tight enough squeeze leads business management to cut back on plans to expand productive capacity so that, when the authorities finally do allow business activity to pick up again, shortages develop all over the place and new inflationary symptoms rapidly appear.

But these are not the only ways in which the administration of the classic medicine to the free market leads to an allocation of resources different from what we might want. Part of the prescription for this medicine calls for a reduction in government spending. Hence, between conscious budgetary decisions in Washington and virtually insoluble financing problems in state capitols, we are now cutting back on education, on scientific research, on manpower training, on housing, on medical aid to the poor, on aid to the cities, among other things. True, production is being cut back at the automobile factories, the television factories, the chemical factories and the steel factories—but are the resources released there moving into education or housing or urban renewal? Of course not. They are moving into the lines of the unemployed.

The third and most disturbing count against the classic medicine, in addition to its failure to curtail price increases in the service areas and its inflationary and irrational impact on resource allocation, is the giant risks it takes in dealing with the inflationary mentality. For inflation is more than an excess of demand over supply; it is also a state of mind. Americans have learned this the hard way in the present inflationary episode because it is unique in our recent history. After World War II, although prices rose very sharply from 1946 to 1948, rapid conversion to peacetime production and the absorption of millions of ex-GIs into the labor force enabled supply to grow at an extraordinary rate and to overwhelm demand within three years. The same pattern repeated itself after Korea. In 1957-58, before the inflationary virus could really get into our veins, the classic medicine contributed to the deepest of our postwar recessions and then kept us below maximum growth rates for at least three years.

This time, the story has been different. First, prices had been remarkably stable all during the period of impressive economic growth that preceded the 1965 escalation in Vietnam, so that inflationary expectations were slow to get started even though

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prices soon started climbing at a disturbing rate. But President Johnson, for a variety of reasons, postponed too long the unattractive recommendation of a tax increase. The Federal Reserve jammed on the monetary brakes in 1966. Then, although the brakes really took hold and prices did flatten out (again, except in the service area), fear of overkill soon led to a relaxation of monetary policy. Easier money also accompanied the early months after passage of the tax increase in mid-1968.

These vacillations of policy, combined with a genuine condition of demand in excess of supply, finally convinced the American people that nothing would stop inflation and that now it was every man for himself. With the prices of everything climbing so fast, no union leader could afford to ask for a smaller wage increase than his competitors were winning. No businessman could wait too long to raise prices, for fear that he would never be able to keep pace with his costs and maintain his profit margin. The most serious and distressing aberration of the inflationary mentality also appeared in earnest: buy today because tomorrow it will cost more. This attitude has taken hold to some extent with consumers, but it has become endemic in the business community where, despite much excess capacity, high financing costs and flat sales curves, spending for the expansion of plant and equipment has continued to climb. When the inflationary wave finally subsides, an incalculable amount of this expenditure will turn out to have been ill-timed and misplaced.

How can the authorities deal with this type of mentality, which keeps the inflationary spiral spinning and spinning? Only by putting on the screws, tightening them continuously, and stubbornly keeping them tight regardless of objective evidence that would otherwise justify a reversal of policy. In other words, the authorities must be firm, courageous, determined. Any suggestion of a weakening in their resolve would not only make possible a renewal of actual inflationary forces but would show that they do not mean business. Consequently, they have to keep the screws on beyond any measure of doubt, beyond the point where inflation *might* be tapering off, until, in God's good time, the price level is finally moving up at only a nominal rate or, even better, moving sideways.

But that is precisely where the danger of overkill comes in. If, because of the dangers inherent in the persistence of inflationary expectations, the authorities dare not change policies too soon, they inevitably run the risks of changing them too late. Indeed, if any one policy, such as the tax surcharge, fails to act as expected, then other policies, such as tight money, must be laid on with extra vigor.

Hence, we now stand at a point where the overall level of business activity has ceased its normal upward moment. But it is also a point where private debts are at record highs and the liquidity that businessmen and individuals sorely need is at record lows. By keeping the lid on the money supply for most of 1969, the authorities made financing of expenditures increasingly difficult, so that every possible source of cash was tapped and liquid reserves in all areas were run down to virtually nothing. Consequently, as business activity tapers off, we have perilously little slack, too little margin for error. Only retrenchment down the line can rebuild the cash needed to pare these debts down. Under such circumstances, trouble in one spot can spread like a forest fire to another and another and another.

And yet, unless a really severe financial crisis erupts, the authorities will shift toward an easier stance only gradually, if at all. They are surely aware of the dilemma in which they have found themselves. But the grand strategy of the classic medicine has painted them into a corner; they simply don't know the way out.

The difficulties extend beyond this point. If all goes reasonably well, so that business activity does slow down a little and not too much, so that wage contract settlements are easier to make but without a heavy load of unemployment, so that price increases taper off but without a ruinous bout of price wars, so that people finally realize that inflation has been snuffed out but that economic growth is still "in"—if all of this happens, we might then begin to think once again in terms of a resumption of growth in production, of higher profits, or more employment, of more public spending for the educational facilities and hospitals and housing we need so urgently. *Or will we?*

If this reduction of the inflation fever occurs too soon, we shall have rebuilt too little liquidity to finance the increased spending that a resumption of growth implies. Money will be either too expensive to borrow or simply unavailable on any terms, but individuals and business firms will have insufficient cash to finance their expenditures without borrowing. If, as an offset, the Federal Reserve authorities allow the money supply to increase so that this financing bottleneck is broken, they run the very real risk that their policy will finance price increases as well as production increases—and that the public will read their decision as a belated but nonetheless significant capitulation to the insatiable monetary pressures of inflation.

Hence, even if we avoid recession or worse, the outlook for the resumption of economic growth in step with our potentialities is bleak. From 1957 to 1960, when similar attitudes prevailed and when the business recovery from the 1958 recession was aborted by super-tight money in 1959, our output of goods and services rose a total of only 7.7 per cent, compared with growth of 19.1 per cent from 1960 to 1964 when less Calvinist philosophies prevailed.

And slow growth is no fun. It can lead to excessively high unemployment rates at a time when the labor force is rising rapidly as the postwar babies born in the 1940s and 1950s reach working age. In

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addition, the 800,000 or so people added to the armed forces as a result of the Vietnamese adventure will be going through demobilization and many of them will also be looking for work.

But slow growth implies more than the painful and shocking phenomenon of people who want work and cannot find it. Each percentage point of annual growth means about $10 billion worth of production, which is, for example, the equivalent of about 500,000 dwelling units or almost half again as much as total federal annual budget outlays on education and manpower. If we have zero growth during 1970 (let us hope we avoid an actual decline in total output), we shall have failed to produce at least $40 billion of goods and services that we have the capability of producing, much of which we could put to good use to improve the quality of life in this nation. Are we going to have a replay of the 1957-60 experience, when production ran a total of nearly $100 billion, or around 20 per cent below potential output over a three-year period?

Seen from this view, at this moment in time, the classic medicine may kill the patient before it cures him; at best, it may result in lingering side effects that will long delay a resurgence of robust good health. Yet, two years ago or so, when the argument about the tax surcharge was raging, most economists, regardless of political stripe or theoretical preferences, would have agreed that the classic medicine was the right thing to prescribe in the circumstances. What we failed to understand, or to foresee, was the virulence with which the inflationary mentality was going to take hold. It had not happened before: despite all the talk about inflation ever since the war, very few instances of excessive forward buying or of charging every penny the market would bear could be found. Indeed, the remarkable price stability of the first five years of the decade in the face of rapid economic growth only fortified the impression that a little tight money and a little additional tax burden would relieve us of the problem in short order.

What we now know is that this approach cannot work in an atmosphere where people not only talk about inflation but *act* on it. Raise taxes, and consumers and businessmen will cut their savings or go into debt to maintain or increase their expenditures. Deny the commercial banks the resources to make loans or buy bonds, and they will dig deep and pay any price to find new ways to raise money to lend out. Their customers, meanwhile, will also tap new sources and pay any price for cash in order to spend today instead of tomorrow. Worse yet, a "gimme-gimme" mentality develops, in which everyone wants the highest possible price for his labor or goods or services, in order to be able to pay the gouging high price that he expects to be charged on the things that he must buy. This process is completely self-generating and can continue almost indefinitely.

Under these circumstances, the authorities have no choice but to remain steadfast, to overstay and to gamble with the risk of overkill. But then this means that the classic medicine is no longer appropriate for the illness from which we suffer. In short, anyone who takes the most superficial look at the business statistics can see that we are no longer in a condition where demand exceeds supply, but wages and prices are still going up at an alarming rate. Hence, instead of squeezing demand still further (and squeezing it some more later on when it begins to pick up again), we now have no choice but to go after the inflationary process itself and do something *directly* about the price and wage situation.

It is true, of course, that controls are devilishly hard to administer, particularly in the absence of a great national motivation, such as inspired the nation during World War II. In addition, any set of controls inevitably creates injustices and inequalities. This means that violations may be annoyingly frequent and that pressures to get out from under the controls may lead to their premature relaxation. Yet the risks here seem minor compared with the gigantic risks we run by continuing to administer the classic medicine. Furthermore, it is ironic that the moralistic Nixon Administration has so explicitly excluded any form of even informal and indirect influence on the wage and price decision-making process—no "jawboning," no guidelines, no criticism of the greed that has taken hold and is widespread. Just cut spending and throw people out of work.

The direct way to make people stop trying to beat the price increases and to charge as much (or even more than) the market will bear is to tell them that prices are going to stop going up or that, at least, stop going up so fast. Let us return to a set of guidelines as to what is admissible and proper in raising prices and to what extent we can raise wages without pressing on prices. Let us put business and labor on the defensive when it comes to these decisions, instead of leaving them aggressively on the offensive.

There may be howls and grumbles and violations. But the American people are not stupid and they are frightened about where the present process may be leading them. Tell John Jones that the cost of living will rise only 3 per cent instead of 6 per cent next year, and he will handle himself very differently. Tell him that his earnings will also go up more slowly—but that everyone's wage boosts are also going to slow down, and he will take it in stride. *When he stops expecting inflation, he will stop helping to create inflation.* And when we stop expecting inflation, the distortions and tensions in our financial markets will also begin to unwind, relieving the terrible and imminent dangers of a crisis there.

President Nixon has always seemed to be much more a pragmatist than a man who adheres rigidly to doctrine. Arthur Burns, new chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, is reputed to have a similar temperament. They have very little time left in which to prove that this is so. □

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NIXSPEAK

RHETORIC OF OPPOSITES

LYNN HINDS and CAROLYN SMITH
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Because of the prestige of his office, the way a President talks about issues determines the way public discussion can proceed. A political climate conducive to reasonable public discussion depends largely on how he shapes the issues which are to be discussed. Sadly, Nixon's old style has been polished, not changed. The new Nixon is but an ingenious version of the old Nixon.

The old Nixon was a rhetorical Nixon; his habit of language dealt in extremes. As Meg Greenfield put it in "The Prose of Richard Nixon" (*The Reporter*, September 29, 1960), "Nixon apparently finds it almost impossible to make a statement that is *not*, in some manner, an argument. Ideas never quite exist for him until they have been pitted against something else—an extreme danger, a radically different point of view, or a potential attack from some sinister quarter." The old Nixon had to make war on something.

There are occasions when the use of polemic can be an effective rhetorical strategy. Capable statesmen have used this technique to clarify important issues. But for Nixon it is more than a technique; it is a state of mind. He perceives in opposites, he thinks in opposites, and therefore he speaks in opposites. The old Nixon put his rhetoric to use most often by attacking a straw man or a straw position. In his famous "Checkers" speech, he argued that the people who were trying to smear him were the same ones who had opposed him in the Alger Hiss case. They were his straw men, the ones who had defended Hiss, and who had been wrong to oppose Nixon. This saved him the trouble of having to explain his secret campaign fund.

In 1956, Nixon converted Adlai Stevenson's proposal for stopping nuclear testing into a call for unilateral disarmament. Unilateral disarmament thus became the straw position against which Nixon could contrast his own. And his own could be made to look reasonable by contrast with the extreme stand attributed to Stevenson. At times Nixon has conjured straw men from within his own ranks. Time and again, he has referred to mysterious, unnamed advisers who urged caution and expediency. He has often announced that he was taking the honest way, against their advice, and without regard for political gain. In case after case Nixon would say: "I have been advised not to talk about [this or that], but I am going to tell the truth." He kept his own stable of straw men.

Macpherson, Toronto Star

As Nixon's political career advanced he became ever more ingenious in the use of the straw technique. In his August 8, 1969 proposal for welfare reform (in many respects his best speech), Nixon set up the straw position of a guaranteed annual income as the opposite to his family assistance program. A guaranteed income would, he said, "undermine the incentive to work . . . establish a right without responsibilities." He added that "there is no reason why one person should be taxed so that another can choose to live idly." But there existed no proposal for a guaranteed annual income which exposed the society to the dangers described by Nixon. Those who advocated an annual income included an incentive plan, the right to work, plus other features found in Nixon's plan. But the straw proposal functioned to make Nixon's own proposal look less extreme.

In his speech on Vietnam, Nixon characterized the opposition to the war in straw-man terms. All the dissenters were lumped together under the banner, "Lose in Vietnam; bring the boys home." Though he was careful to point out that a free society must allow for dissent, the President characterized all dissenters in extreme terms. He paid no attention to the degrees of dissent nor to the various shades of opinion held by differing groups. Because Nixon talked and thought in opposites we were asked to choose between two extremes: his position which

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was right and reasonable, or that of his straw men which implied defeat and humiliation.

Another feature of Nixon's rhetoric is the reliance on *non sequiturs*. In the "Checkers" speech he asserted that the fund was not really secret, that Pat wore a cloth coat, that he was a veteran. The public was expected to conclude from these confidences that Nixon had not made an error in judgment when he accepted money from special interest groups.

False opposites are another of his devices. In the speech on Vietnam, Nixon contrasted "political" with what is good for the country, as though the two were inherently opposed. He contrasted the easy way with the right way, as though the right way could never be easy, or that his way was right because it wasn't easy. For Nixon an act of protest is either constitutional or it is a demonstration; by implication, constitutional demonstrations are impossible. Minority opinion is opposed to reasonableness; the public is expected to conclude that only majorities are reasonable. Again in the speech on Vietnam, one was either unpatriotic or in wholehearted agreement with Nixon's position. False contrasts help to achieve Nixon's rhetoric of opposites. They blend a moral judgment with a political position and thus influence the way in which a given issue can be discussed.

Nixon also uses all-or-nothing techniques. Again he so states positions that there can be no middle ground. In his 1968 speech accepting the Republican nomination for President, Nixon spoke of "the great majority of Americans, the forgotten Americans," the category which was later to be labeled the "silent majority." He described this group, whoever they are, in rigid all-or-nothing terms. They are, he said, the non-demonstrators; "they're not racist or sick, they're not guilty of the crime that plagues the land." These Americans are the people who work, who "provide the soldiers who die to keep us free." The contrast is sharp; one is either a member of the majority and thus endowed with American virtues, or one is a demonstrator and therefore wicked. While the majority works, pays taxes, and goes patriotically to war, the demonstrators are lazy, unemployed draft dodgers.

The all-or-nothing strategy appeared in Nixon's welfare speech. He said: "After a third of a century of power flowing from the people and from the states to Washington it is time for a new federalism in which power, funds and responsiblity will flow from Washington to the states and to the people." A reasonable position would suggest that any brand of federalism demands that power, money and responsibility be shared. The situation simply cannot be totally one way or the other. But Richard Nixon would have it so.

There are two sides in the Vietnamese War: the Communist and the free. His very naming of the sides put the issue in the all-or-nothing category. If a nation is Communist it obviously cannot be free. All the associations which cluster about the word "free" thus support Nixon's position, and prove the point against the "unfree." And there are two choices for ending the war. The one way is characterized by Nixon as "an immediate precipitate withdrawal of all Americans from Vietnam without regard to the effects of that action." The only other way is the Nixon way, and one is not allowed to ask whether proposals that fall somewhere between the two extremes could have merit.

One of the most interesting strategies in the Nixon rhetoric is the bald statement of the two sides of an issue. Nixon often does this without attempting to support one side over the other or attempting to reconcile the two positions. In his acceptance speech of 1968 he set forth two popular positions on the issue of law and order. He said, "Let us always respect, as I do, our courts and those who serve on them. But let us also recognize that some of our courts in their decisions have gone too far in weakening the peace forces against the criminal forces in this country." By this technique Nixon can pay his respects to both sides of a question without having to state his own position. When as Vice President he spoke on civil rights, Nixon managed to include various positions, moving over them as though crossing the stepping stones of a brook without getting his feet wet. In a single speech he would affirm his belief in the civil rights plank of the Republican platform, but add that he knew the problem because he had lived in the South, that he knew full well laws alone were not the answer. One could infer that Nixon stood somewhere on the issue, and each voter could hear what he wanted to hear.

This technique came early in the speech on Vietnam. The President pointed out that many had criticized President Johnson's decision to send American forces to Vietnam; Nixon himself had been critical of the way the war had been conducted. Thus he dissociated himself from the previous administration's war policy. Then he identified himself with what he had rejected: "Three American Presidents have recognized the great stakes involved in Vietnam and understood what had to be done." Both positions are affirmed by Nixon. He made no attempt to reconcile the contradiction.

Nixon alluded to President Kennedy's assertion that we believe in the national independence of Vietnam. He nodded his agreement: "We believe in that. We are not going to withdraw from that effort. In my opinion for us to withdraw from that effort would mean a collapse not only of South Vietnam but of Southeast Asia. So we're going to stay there." Later in the speech he said that he had a plan to bring the war to an end "regardless of what happens on the negotiating front . . . a plan which we have worked out in cooperation with the South Vietnamese for the complete withdrawal of all United States

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ground forces." There are the two opposites; his rhetoric makes it appear that both can be true.

Nixon's rhetoric has important implications both for himself and for the political climate of the country. The effect on Nixon is to limit his options. What he needed to do in the speech on the war was to prevent further polarization on the war. He needed to move the American people closer to a middle ground in order to gain time to work out his plan for ending the war. Instead, the speech caused further polarization, the opposite of what Nixon needed. His rhetorical habit left him no alternative.

The speech was so ill-suited to what was needed that political commentators concluded that Nixon must have intended the effect he produced. Several writers said that he obviously wanted a polarization of opinion which would isolate dissenters and doom the expected November demonstration. But further polarization can only magnify the protest by driving dissenters farther from middle ground. The only option left open for dissent is bigger demonstrations. The outpouring of letters in response to the speech, and the opinion polls indicating support for Nixon, are more evidence of mounting division on the war. He drove people into one of two camps, each farther from the middle and thus farther from each other.

The importance of the office of the President makes Nixon's rhetorical style potentially disastrous. At worst it could polarize the country to the extent that division could tear us apart. At best it makes reasonable public discussion of issues impossible. Thus public dialogue is closed off, producing the end of ideas, until someone changes the rhetoric.

William Lee Miller believes that Mr. Nixon developed his rhetoric as a debater ("The Debating Career of Richard M. Nixon," *The Reporter*, April 19, 1956.) Whether or not that is the origin, debate is an appropriate model. Public discussion requires that many points of view be heard on every issue. Debate demands that an issue be argued in rigidly drawn opposites. When the President's rhetoric forces debate before reasonable discussion can proceed, the result is sloganeering. If there is an opposite to sloganeering it is reasonable public discussion. Reasonable public discussion is the air of democracy; a truly free society cannot breathe without it. □

LAND REFORM IN PERU

EDMUNDO FLORES

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Mexico City

Last September I was invited with Salomon Eckstein, an authority in agricultural cooperatives and chairman of the School of Economics at Israel's Bar Ilan University, to visit the agrarian reform areas of Peru and to discuss with Peruvian specialists the reorganization of agriculture along cooperative lines.

In October, Eckstein and I spent three hurried weeks in Peru. We visited the sugar cane plantations seized by the government near Trujillo and Chiclayo in the north; the Sierra de Cuzco and the Valle de la Convención, which was the center of intense guerrilla warfare from 1963 to 1967 and is currently an area of reform in which tea and coffee cooperatives have been established.

We found that what has taken place in Peru in a little more than a year does not fit at all into the classic pattern of a Latin American military *coup d'état*; nor does it resemble a Communist take-over. (For one thing, former owners are being reimbursed for their property, according to a formula to be described later in this article.) Instead, it looks and feels like a nationalist revolution, with rituals and rhetoric of its own. Understanding this revolutionary variant is important, for it will bring new opportunities for development as well as increased tensions and conflicts of interest between Peru and the Nixon Administration. Since this revolution is in no sense inspired by the Left, it will test the sincerity of American pronouncements in favor of modernizing Latin America.

Fernando Belaúnde Terry, a patrician architect and politician of mild liberal impulses, became constitutional President of Peru on July 28, 1963. In his acceptance speech, as on many occasions during his Presidential campaign, he promised to resolve within ninety days an old and complicated conflict between the International Petroleum Company (IPC), a subsidiary of Standard Oil of New Jersey, and Peru. He also promised agrarian reform.

Five years later, on October 3, 1968, in the midst of economic stagnation and with his promises unfulfilled—his most notable achievement was to begin construction of a highway from nowhere to nowhere along the Peruvian edge of the Amazon jungle—Belaúnde was ousted by the armed forces and put on a plane to Argentina. Six days later, the army occupied the petroleum complex of IPC in the northern city of Talara, and it has since then been administered by Peruvian personnel. On June 24, 1969, Gen. Juan Velasco Alvarado, President of Peru, enacted a very tough, summary agrarian reform law and told the peasants: "The landowner will no longer be fed by your hunger."

On June 26, the eight most important agro-industrial firms of the country, the pride and source

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of power of the Peruvian oligarchy and of foreign corporations, were ousted from their holdings. These made up about 225,000 acres of irrigated lands on the coast—80 per cent of the cultivated land—and employed more than 15,000 men, mostly for sugar cane. The plantations taken over were: Casagrande, Laredo, Cartavio, Pomalca, Tumán, Pucalá, Pátalo, Cayalti and Paramonga. Plans were put forward immediately to reorganize them into cooperatives, in which the field and factory workers, the staff and technicians would participate. Meanwhile, they are being administered by government technicians and production has continued without interruption. The former landlords and a few high-ranking employees left their seignorial enclaves and homes without offering resistance. The change in ownership of these huge enterprises is now an accomplished and irreversible fact.

What happened at Gildemeister and Co., which was the biggest sugar producer in South America and accounted for nearly 30 per cent of the Peruvian crop, is characteristic of the whole overthrow. Gildemeister's main plantation, Casagrande, covered 260,500 acres of which 47,500 were irrigated. The same enterprise owned about 27,500 acres of irrigated land in another valley of the coast, and large haciendas in the mountains. In La Libertad, they owned about 750,000 acres; 25,000 more in Cajamarca and 50,000 acres of grazing land and forests in Hualgayoc. In all, Gildemeister owned 1.2 million acres. All its properties were seized and are now in the process of being granted to its former employees.

While this was going on, a most important act of the legislature established that water, without exception, is now the property of the state and that all private rights over this resource are abolished. Formerly, the private ownership of water along the arid area of the coast gave those who controlled it absolute power over the people and cattle.

The Peruvian activists have now lost their cause and they deeply resent it. The military has forestalled them, though wisely it has left their rhetoric untouched. Every revolutionary faction—the *apristas*, mesmerized since 1929 by the now senile Haya de la Torre; the Communists; the Trotskyites; the former guerrillas of the National Liberation Movement; the members of *Acción Popular* and the Christian Democrats—aspired to nationalize petroleum and other mineral deposits and to bring about agrarian reform. But none of them was able to carry out such policies, because whoever seriously tried was killed by the army or, at best, jailed or exiled.

Now, a military government, to whom everyone attributed the most conservative convictions, has snatched the goals from the old activists, and has in one year done more to transform the economic structure of the country than had any other government or political party in all the history of Peru.

In spite of this, the Left abstains from openly attacking the military government, in order not to side with the conservatives or, more likely, to prevent a greater deterioration of their own position, since it is evident that the military is doing with incredible speed precisely what the Left had always proposed to do. The Right, understandably, hates the military even more intensely, but as yet has not found a counter strategy. It prays for economic disaster, while trying pathetically to arouse foreign investors and governments against the present regime.

Other foreign interests, especially the American, which owned more than half of the sugar plantations of the coast, have joined with the International Petroleum Company in their demands to Washington for reprisals.

Agriculture in Peru employs approximately 65 per cent of the labor force and produces 15 per cent of the national product. Before the reforms, it could not possibly have been in worse shape. Over the past decade, population has increased at the average rate of 3 per cent annually, agriculture at only 2 per cent. This disparity intensified hunger and raised food imports from $67 million in 1960 to $160 million in 1966. Emergency food grants under U.S. Public Law 480 amounted to more than $32 million from 1954 to 1966. In 1966, cereals and meat imports alone amounted to $72 million. As if that were not enough, since 1962, both the amount and the price of Peruvian agricultural exports declined. Thus in the last decade agriculture both failed to supply the domestic market and produced ever less foreign exchange.

Nor is that all. A handful of Peruvians—the landowner class, which numbers less than 1 per cent of the rural population—and a few international corporations (the W. R. Grace Co. and Gildemeister, most conspicuously)—owned more than 80 per cent of all the productive land. These immense holdings made them the main beneficiaries of agricultural credit, water for irrigation, technical assistance, access to national and international markets and the bulk of the agricultural income. In underdeveloped agricultural nations there is a very close correlation between the concentration of land ownership, the concentration of income and the concentration of political power. That was Peru.

If the oligarchy had at least invested its enormous income in Peru, the situation of the country could have been improved in the long run. Increased investment would have acted favorably upon employment and other economic variables, and eventually the productive capacity of the economy would have risen. But a well-deserved feeling of guilt made the oligarchy fear the day of expropriation. It prudently declined to reinvest its savings—and, in macroeconomic terms, those of the nation—in its own country and instead exported them to the capital markets of the United States and Europe. Thus in addition to a gross inefficiency and a certain perpetuation of hunger, the concentration of land ownership led to vast capital exports.

Other consequences of the land monopoly easily

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Vadillo, Siempre (Mexico)

followed. Five per cent of the agricultural population owned small tracts of land; approximately 88 per cent, or almost a million peasant families, were landless. Nearly all were illiterate and all were desperately poor. Their salaries in cash were minimal, and often they worked without pay in exchange for permission to cultivate small tracts of land. Some landowners had their own police force and private dungeons, as during the times of Porfirio Díaz in Mexico or during the ante-bellum days in the American South.

There were exceptions. Certain plantations were operated efficiently by owners who showed a paternalistic concern for the well-being of their workers. More important, on the large plantations of the coast, the *apristas* organized a labor movement which gained for its members wages and fringe benefits up to five times higher, in real terms, than those of the nonunionized workers. That was not an absolute gain. The higher wages led the landlords to mechanize their operations and to try all kinds of devices to rid themselves of the largest possible number of workers. Unemployment rose. When the agrarian reform decree was proclaimed, the landowners and the unions were involved in their usual protracted in-fighting. The sudden take-over of the plantations left the union leaders in the air, and one of the riddles of the future is what function the former union leaders will have in the new cooperatives.

Walt H. Rostow, whom nobody could accuse of being a leftist, says in *The Stages of Economic Growth,* that in order to start the development of nations, "The income above minimum levels of consumption, largely concentrated in the hands of those who own land, must be shifted into the hands of those who will spend it on roads and railroads, schools and factories rather than on country houses and servants, personal ornaments and temples."

Rostow is right, and the policy for bringing about the shift he calls for is land reform. Land reform checks capital exports by impoverishing landowners. It increases the real income of the peasant, and at the same time it raises domestic capital formation so that schools, factories and overhead facilities can be built. In the long run, it increases the efficiency of the agricultural sector through the reorganization of holdings and the adoption of such innovations as high-yield varieties of rice, corn, wheat, fertilizers, etc., which have caused "The Green Revolution."

However, in order to achieve these objectives, agrarian reform must be quick and massive. This, in Peru, implies granting lands to approximately half a million rural families over the next five years, and that is precisely what the new government plans to do.

Why didn't the previous government follow a vigorous agrarian reform policy? When Edgard Seoane, a professional agronomist who was Belaúnde's vice president and head of the national office for Land Reform and Agricultural Development, was asked this question (at a recent press interview in Lima after his own hacienda was appropriated), he replied: "My office began a vigorous reform in the Sierra Central during the first hundred days of the Belaúnde government, when the law still had not been promulgated. This caused real panic in Parliament and several power interest groups began to exert strong pressures at all levels against its application. Once the hundred days were over, everything was impossible because of the inoperativity of the law and because neither the Parliament nor the President had the will to carry out an authentic agrarian reform."

Belaúnde's agrarian reform law, passed in 1964, was even more marginal than his highway skirting the Amazon jungle. It exempted the sugar planta-

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tions of the coast, which made it as innocuous as a progressive income tax which would exempt the rich. Enforcing a genuine land reform program is major surgery.

The new law is stripped of delays, formalities and loopholes. It leaves no doubt as to its objective: the rapid implementation of the reform, beginning with the most difficult task—the reformation of the rich plantations of the coast. It established that no judicial action or intervention emanating from civil courts can obstruct, detain or paralyze the process of expropriation.

The law contains seventeen titles, 196 articles and several special and transitory provisions. Its main goal and procedure is to eliminate all forms of human exploitation and to give the land to the farmer who works it. To achieve this ideal, the state assumes responsibility for financing the reform and developing agriculture with public appropriations.

Land for the landless comes from corporations and other types of joint ownerships which are now prevented by law from owning rural land; from idle or abandoned lands as well as from lands cultivated by peasants who had no formal contact with the landowner, and from lands in which no anti-social or feudal form of exploitation prevailed. Those who get land will pay for it in twenty annuities, beginning from transferal date. The landowners will be indemnified for this land at the values set by them for the purpose of paying taxes on rural property.

When the value of the land does not exceed 100,000 *soles* ($1 equals 43 *soles*) it will be paid for in cash; when it exceeds this limit, 100,000 *soles* will be paid for in cash and the rest in nominative, non-transferable bonds which mature twenty years after their issuance, and pay a maximum of 6 per cent annually and a minimum of 4 per cent. All livestock will be paid for in cash. Installations, constructions, agricultural and industrial equipment will be paid for in cash up to an amount not exceeding 1 million *soles*, and the remainder in bonds. In addition, the bonds of the agrarian debt will be accepted at face value by the state if they are used to finance up to 50 per cent of the value of government-approved industries, in which the holder or holders of bonds would invest another 50 per cent in cash.

The belief shared by many agrarian reformers, that whoever gives land to peasants in a nation of *latifundias* gains political loyalty for several generations, is now being put to test in Peru. On a recent visit to the "solid north," bastion of the *Aprismo*, President Velasco and his cabinet were wildly cheered by thousands of peasants from the sugar plantations. This support should also be felt among the technicians who take part in the reform. They don't really like the army but are excited by their job, since transforming these great agro-industrial enterprises into free, democratically organized and efficient cooperatives is a task without precedent in the non-Socialist world and a true challenge to the creative capacity of Peruvians.

The urban middle classes, however, are another proposition. Although day by day they seem to be losing their frigidity, they have not yet given themselves to the military. After all, land reform is one thing and urban unemployment another.

If the outcome of the revolution taking place today in Peru concerned Peruvians alone I would have no doubt about its success. Unhappily, the United States can easily, by design or blunder, compound the difficulties faced in its aggressive reform efforts by the understandably naive military government of Peru. Not to yield to the temptation of applying the Hickenlooper amendments, to cut back the sugar quota, or to activate the cloak-and-dagger invisible government into direct action will, no doubt, require exceptional restraint on the part of various elements in the American Establishment. Yet no less is required to break the stiff feudal barriers that today keep Peru and much of Latin America immersed in the backwaters of the 19th century. □

THAT CHEAP FLIGHT TO ROME

WHO SETS THE PLANE FARES?

K.G.J. PILLAI
Mr. Pillai is the author of The Air Net: The Case Against the World Aviation Cartel *(Grossman).*

For nearly six weeks in the last quarter of 1969 a small segment of trans-Atlantic air passengers benefited from the low tourist fares which emerged from a brief outbreak of price competition among the international airlines. Passengers and some of the industry analysts were so elated by the event that they even interpreted it as the beginning of a new era of competitive pricing on the international routes, and as a belated realization by the carriers that competition is the key to air-travel merchandising. However, the competitive fervor subsided when IATA (International Air Transport Association), the private business association of 104 international airlines, convened emergency conferences of airline executives, asked them to negotiate day and night, and produced from the airlines an agreement to restore, from March 1970, the prices that had prevailed before the onset of competition.

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The short-lived bargain sale occurred when Alitalia, the Italian airline, set aside an IATA excursion fare which stipulated $409 for the New York-Rome round trip and established a new fare of $299. The twenty-three other international airlines that operate on the North Atlantic routes, and were parties to the discarded IATA fares pact, followed suit. Reduction in the price to Rome caused simultaneous lowering of prices to other European points. For example, the round-trip tourist fare from New York to London was lowered to $260 from the IATA-fixed $300. The public responded quickly: Alitalia reported a 50 per cent increase in advance bookings in the three weeks that followed price reduction over the corresponding period of the previous year.

Price competition is an uncommon feature of international air transportation. For the last twenty-five years fares, charges for baggage, and all other conditions of air travel have been determined by the airlines jointly, through exclusive conferences and secret negotiations periodically arranged by IATA. Government regulatory agencies and the consumers have never been permitted to take part in IATA deliberations. More than 95 per cent of the world's scheduled airlines, irrespective of their size, efficiency or national origin, support IATA decisions and respect IATA fares. Any airline which refused to join the guild could be subjected by IATA to a variety of punitive measures.

The price competition triggered by the Italian carrier looked, therefore, like a bold challenge to authority, but surprisingly, the line was not punished by IATA or its constituents. Nor did the British Government threaten Alitalia with a possible confiscation of all Italian planes, as it did in 1963 with respect to U.S. planes when the United States disapproved a 5 per cent IATA fare increase. Some observers began to wonder what was behind Alitalia's solo flight. A review of events provides the answer.

IATA's program to write a new set of international fares for the 1970s began in Cannes in September 1968. This time the industry faced certain new problems which were largely beyond the control of IATA. Some members demanded a reduced schedule to attract more traffic to fill the jumbo jets which are expected to provide some 30 million additional passenger seats by 1971. Further, IATA members had to meet the price competition offered by the supplemental or nonscheduled airlines of the United States and Europe. The supplementals were winning the patronage of the traveling public, embarrassing IATA airlines by calling attention to their unjustifiably high fares. Therefore, IATA felt it necessary to invent new types of fare offers which would undercut the supplementals and eliminate them from the market.

After much debate, IATA recessed its Cannes conference, acknowledging the seriousness of the problems. The director-general warned the airlines that governments would take the rate-making power from their hands unless they agreed on some rate formulas. The conference reconvened in Geneva and again adjourned in dispute. Finally, meeting in Dallas, the airline executives agreed on fares to be charged until 1972. However, the IATA agreement embodied at least two elements that were objectionable to the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB) of the United States. One was a proposed 5 per cent increase in the normal economy class round-trip fares, those levied from the vast majority of ordinary travelers throughout the year. The other was a set of inclusive-tour fares designed to be cheaper than offers of the same type from the supplementals. The supplementals objected that these bargains were "loss leaders," set below actual costs of operation of IATA airlines, and that the increase in the economy fares was intended to offset the loss which might result from the uneconomical inclusive tours. The CAB postponed its approval of certain items of the Dallas fares pact, pending investigation.

The failure of the CAB to approve the fares automatically infuriated all the scheduled airlines, including Alitalia. They wanted to teach the CAB a lesson, and to demonstrate to all anti-IATA forces the consequences that could stem from governmental curiosity as to IATA decisions. Alitalia then made its move. There was wide publicity about a "chaotic rate war" over the North Atlantic. IATA promptly convened a series of fares conferences and finally produced an agreement in Caracas which embodied all the salient features of the denounced Dallas agreement, including the 5 per cent increase. Even though the examiner of the CAB had already recommended disapproval of that hike, a spokesman for IATA predicted that the approval of Caracas agreement was "95 per cent certain."

Despite contrary claims by Alitalia, there are strong indications that last year's flurry of competition was an airline ploy sponsored, or at least happily acquiesced in, by IATA. The following circumstances lead to that conclusion:

(1) While the complexity and exorbitance of IATA fares were cited by Alitalia as its reasons for denouncing the Dallas fares pact, the airline readily accepted, giving reasons, the new Caracas agreement, which adopted the same rates and an even more complicated rate structure.

(2) The antecedent behavior of Alitalia does not show that it has ever advocated low fares. On the

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contrary, Alitalia, along with its European counterparts, fought and won a battle against the CAB in 1963 when the latter opposed IATA's then current increases. *The New York Times* has recently quoted a speech in which the president of Alitalia in 1966 spoke for low and simplified fares. But there is nothing remarkable about that: airlines often make such public pronouncements with a view to improving their images before the traveling public.

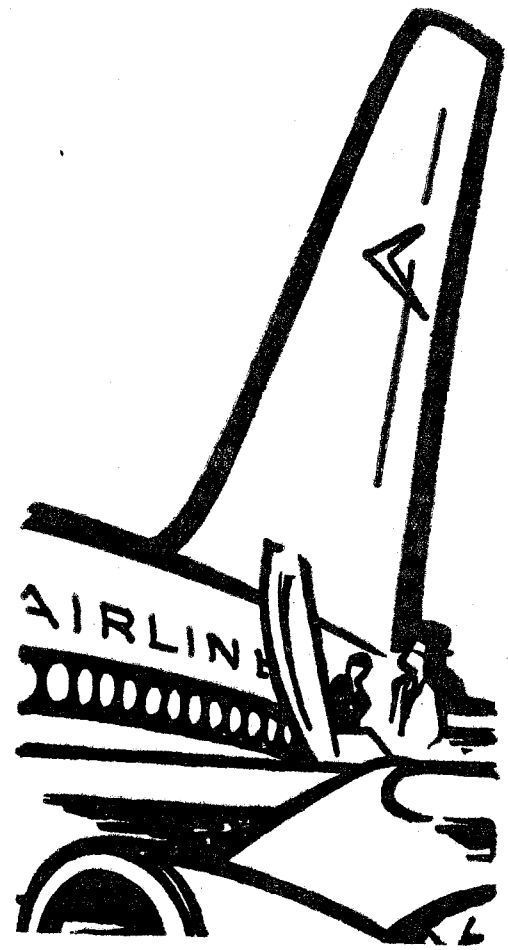
(3) Neither Alitalia nor any other IATA member showed competitive spirit in 1969 by cutting the normal economy fares. All the excitement about the "rate war" was based on a price reduction in the 14-to-21-day tourist fare, which was only one of many "promotional fares" in effect on the North Atlantic route. None of the airlines considered it urgent to cut the same 14-to-21-day excursion fares on the Pacific routes which are relatively much higher than North Atlantic excursion rates. Moreover, on the North Atlantic route, the IATA airlines did not indulge in *competitive* cutting; they lowered their prices only to the level set by Alitalia.

There are conflicting interpretations of motive that led Alitalia to create a semblance of a rate war, but it would be unfair to attribute to the carrier a desire for low and simple fares. The evident result of its action was to bring pressure upon the CAB to approve the air fares as agreed upon by the airlines, and thus avoid the blame for unleashing a destructive rate war, which had been temporarily kept in abeyance by a show of IATA enterprise.

IATA is not in any way responsible to the traveling public. A recent poll conducted by the International Institute for Public Opinion shows that 90 per cent of air passengers have not even heard of IATA. According to its president, technical and operational factors are no longer "major IATA issues"; that suggests that IATA exists principally to fix prices. If that be the case, either IATA should cease to exist or consumers and governments must be assured of equitable representation in the rate-making process. It costs a substantial amount of money just to negotiate rate increases; the expenses of recent rate negotiations of IATA are estimated to be $5 million, and the travelers ultimately pay the bills. There is no plausible reason why IATA should negotiate fares in secret sessions. If it is not an international conspiracy against the public, what is it?

Governments would not like to admit that international air transport is essentially an unregulated industry, but, though in theory IATA rates are subject to approval by individual governments, in practice they are ratified almost uncritically and automatically as a normal bureaucratic function. This is done on the advice of national airlines, which themselves are parties to IATA agreements. No single government has access to information regarding the costs and revenues of the international industry that are vital to the determination of equitable rates; nor does any government, acting alone, have the power to make IATA behave responsibly. The result of this pseudo-regulation is that, despite the availability of advanced aviation technology, IATA rates remain artificially high, some of them 50 per cent higher than domestic U.S. fares, and most of them almost double the domestic fares of India.

The number of international air passengers is expected to double between now and 1975. There are



going to be more complaints about high prices, rates for excess baggage, quality of services and facilities inside the planes, right to determine the period of stay at stopover points, and a host of other items that vex today's passengers.

It is disturbing that IATA is moving into related sectors of the airline industry, such as tourist facilities, hotels and insurance. Soon the passengers may have to pay IATA-fixed hotel rents and insurance premiums. The passengers must have some voice in the affairs of the industry, and some place to register their complaints and to get their grievances redressed.

Recently a passenger from India, after a twenty-hour journey, filed numerous complaints with Air-India. The line replied that IATA rules and regulations did not permit it to make the reforms suggested, despite the fact that Air-India would "love" to do so. After receiving that reply, the passenger

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wrote to *The Times of India* (July 17, 1969), as follows:

> My purpose in writing this letter is to ask how long we should tolerate the thralldom imposed upon us by the IATA. What is good and necessary for the passenger is decided not by the passenger or the airline that carries him, but by this unseen, sadistic body, which seems bent upon tormenting and destroying the "untouchable" among the traveling class, if I may conclude from the tone of the holy terror in which airline officials whisper the name, IATA. I wonder if the time has not come to counteract the whims of this despotic body by the formation of an international passengers' association who may boycott all international travel for the next five years. . . .

I agree, and the 287 million international passengers should agree. The remedy lies not in any prospective regulation by governments but in the direct and immediate action of passengers themselves. Let them organize and do something about the cunning IATA autocracy. □

LETTERS *(Continued from page 162)*

plants, there will be a continuing increase in the number of patients on dialysis.

Health authorities have to consider what else they could do with the money. Could they save or prolong or increase the quality or comfort of the lives of more people by devoting the funds to coronary care, rehabilitation or cancer research instead? Working in the same ministry with the health planners are other social planners who may want to use the funds for vocational education, and still others who remind us that the capital cost of one bed in a dialysis unit would provide housing for two or three families.

Beyond the social sector there are still other planners who feel that this money would be better spent stimulating job-making investment in the far north or encouraging diversified agriculture in the prairie provinces or controlling air pollution or providing icebreakers and navigation aids to service territorial waters in the Northwest Passage.

Each one of these decisions, within the health sector or at a higher level, may condemn some individual to die of uremia. While one can be proud of the range and quality of Canadian health services, and of the federal and provincial legislation that makes them financially accessible to the people who need them, the system does not free us from the need to make certain agonizing decisions in problem areas. If anything, it throws these problems into sharper relief once the personal financial barrier to access is removed.

A. Peter Ruderman
Professor of Health Administration
University of Toronto

press competition

Charleston, W. Va.

Dear Sirs: Law Prof. Stephen R. Barnett ["Press Monopoly: Mr. Agnew's Oversight," *The Nation*, Jan. 26] misses A. J. Liebling no less than do many of us in journalism. Moreover, I'm not at all sure that Mr. Liebling would have wholly agreed with his conclusions regarding the "newspaper preservation" act—or what Senator McIntyre has dubbed the "publisher's enrichment" act. (Ain't that beautiful?) As is frequently true, there are two sides to this issue. . . .

I am now arguing selfishly, because I'm publisher of the *Charleston Gazette*, which newspaper has an agency agreement in one of those twenty-two cities the "publisher's enrichment" act would aid.

Until the *Gazette* and the *Charleston Daily Mail* wound up in the same economic bed, combined corporate profits wouldn't have purchased Professor Barnett's legal library. Indeed, even after the two newspapers got together, their line of credit was insufficient to purchase a badly needed new press. We had to buy a secondhand press from *The Washington Post*. Today, economically we do reasonably well. And in my opinion—admittedly biased—we put out two damn good locally owned newspapers.

Although their business interests coalesce in the agency in which both own 50 per cent, their editorial policies are as different as the political opinions of William F. Buckley, Jr. and Carey McWilliams. . . . Now, admittedly, attitudinal divergency may not be enough to justify passage of the "publisher's enrichment" act, but it seems to me there is something good that can be said in behalf of the community that has two newspapers that are locally owned and whose editorial opinions aren't determined by a single owner or subject to determination by the chain owner. I wish Professor Barnett would look hard at all those communities throughout the United States that have a morning and afternoon newspaper commonly owned, and ask himself which community is more apt to enjoy ideological conflict in its press—that community or the one in which is found an agency agreement.

The anomaly of the Justice Department's move against the agency agreement is its failure to move against cities or towns where morning and afternoon dailies are singly owned along with—in many instances—television and radio stations.

According to figures compiled by Senator McIntyre, a decade ago 560 of the daily newspapers in the United States were under chain control. In 1967, the number of chain dailies had increased to 871. . . . During the sixties an average of forty single newspaper ownerships were purchased by chains each year. At the present rate, Senator McIntyre charges, all daily newspapers will be owned by chains in less than twenty years. . . .

Only 4.13 per cent of the country's daily newspaper towns—again to quote the Senator—enjoy competing facilities. I don't know whether agency agreements are included in his statistic or not. From the business standpoint they shouldn't be; from the editorial standpoint they should be.

If nothing else, the agency agreement does make possible competing voices and does perhaps postpone the day that chain operations will be furnishing us all our newspaper news. . . .

W. E. Chalton, III, Publisher, Charleston Gazette

saddles and spurs

San Francisco, Calif.

Dear Sirs: Truman Nelson's vigorous and penetrating criticism of Eugene D. Genovese's outrageous distortions [review of *The World the Slaveholders Made*, *The Nation*, Jan. 19] is particularly welcome at this time, when semanticists and historians who stand truth on its head are enjoying such official favor. For Genovese to cite George Fitzhugh with "glowing enthusiasm" is little short of criminal.

Fitzhugh was an arch reactionary, whose ideology was early imperialist. It was he who said: "Slavery should not be limited to blacks alone; why not white slaves as well? Regardless of color, some are born with saddles on their backs, and some with boots and spurs. And the riding does both good." Hitler's philosophy and ideological fulminations can all be traced to forerunners such as Fitzhugh.

Lester Cole

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

'As the Twig Is Bent the Tree's Inclined'

IVOR KRAFT

Mr. Kraft, formerly child development specialist with HEW, now professor at Sacramento State College, has written frequently for The Nation *on educational issues.*

Our educational critics on the Left (*liberté, égalité, fraternité, témérité*) have produced some of the most anti-establishment analyses to appear since the 1930s. They yearn for equality with freedom, and the audacious application of love (*témérité* plus *fraternité*) to relationships between children and adults. Up Rousseau. It is heady stuff, much of it very worth while. In comparison, "excellence," which got such big play in the early 1960s, is old hat and uninspiring.

But it can get out of hand, and when the first volumes in this review package arrived it looked as though it was going to be a gaggle of gripes from a leftish evangel of educators: all freedom-equality-audacity with little reality. Then Holt arrived, followed by Bendiner. Things were looking up, and the best was yet to come.

We begin with the less than best. *The Classroom Disaster* is a zeroing in of the giant howitzers against what is known in the business as the "self-contained single-teacher classroom." Hart calls it the class-and-grade system, and considers it "unendurably obsolete" and the chief reason for our school troubles. He does not mince words: vicious, demeaning, disastrous, choking, crippling, chilling, deadening, stifling, blundering, nightmarish, mad, ridiculous, tawdry, intolerable, misbegotten—the system is all this and more. It threatens to drag us down and "sunder our democracy," the clock is ticking, etc. Any writer who can cuss out the establishment in that style can't be all bad, and Hart scores many direct hits against our elementary schools. But on close reading the book turns out a disappointment.

Hart is right in saying that the rigid classroom model must be abandoned, but he oversells flexible grouping with individualized instruction as the revolutionary breakthrough. "Evidence is now overwhelming that each child is a law unto himself." Hardly. Of course, each human being *is* unique (and so is every grain of sand, if you get down to the molecular nitty-gritty), but the child frequently does act in conformity with regular physical and psychological laws. Indeed, no sooner is he toilet-trained than he begins massively to absorb the cultural mores and to assume the pallid hues of conformity and infantile conservatism urged on him by his parents. The school, keeping the child less than 1,000 hours a year, is brutally limited in its power to change this. The other 7,800 hours do their work. We are still many generations removed from educational systems and resources that will enable us to operate from the each-child-is-a-creature-unto-himself ideal.

THE CLASSROOM DISASTER. *By Leslie A. Hart. Teachers College Press. 354 pp. $6.95.*

WHO CAN BE EDUCATED? *By Milton Schwebel. Grove Press. 277 pp. $6.50. Paper $2.95.*

THE POLITICS OF SCHOOLS: A Crisis in Self-Government. *By Robert Bendiner. Harper & Row. 240 pp. $6.95.*

THE UNDERACHIEVING SCHOOL. *By John Holt. Pitman Publishing Co. 209 pp. $4.95.*

IN THE EARLY WORLD. *By Elwyn S. Richardson. Pantheon Books. 216 pp. $7.95.*

THE AUTHENTIC CHILD. *By Alan DeWitt Button. Random House. 241 pp. $5.95.*

While Hart appears to be pleading for freedom and openness, he is appalled when teachers display robust differences in behavior ("Teachers simply taught what they pleased, as they pleased, to classes of the same grade supposedly following the same course of study!"). He advocates, for his savior role to get us out of the evil class-and-grade system, a "master teacher" who lectures, presents, and arousingly conveys information to large audiences ("It is done *to* the student, who is passive"), with the mop-up work done by assistants and drill masters. His remedy for the tests and measurements craze is—simply to drop most of them, take the heat off, and allow the kids to go unmeasured for awhile?—no, it is to use more tests, and employ more experts in their use. (I calculate that if we adopted literally Hart's recommendations concerning testing, this single item would add at least $2 billion to our budgets for elementary schools alone. I advocate tripling educational budgets—and education means much more than schools—but I am convinced that to pour more billions into tests and measurements would be folly.) In short, Hart's scheme is not a renovation or revival of the liberating ideas of John Dewey; it is simply a crude if more efficient division of labor, a rationalization of the schooling industry à la Henry Ford.

Dean Schwebel of the Rutgers School of Education has written a book against elitism and inequality of educational opportunity, which also turns out to be a disaster book on a single theme, only in Schwebel's view the big unendurable is the IQ and allied tests. The style is dank dean-ese. ("The directions of possible change, similar in many respects to those in the United States, are given in a report entitled, 'Children and Their Primary Schools,' known as the Plowden Report because Lady Bridget Plowden is chairman of the Central Advisory Council for Education in England from which it emanated.")

Schwebel makes good points, which are worth airing over and over again, and his prescriptions are sound: more money, more representative school boards, fearless administrators, teachers who teach better because they are taught better, freedom with responsibility. But then he goes overboard, saying that he wants teachers to "start with the assumption that the child's capacity to learn is unknown and may, in fact, be infinite." Here we have the anti-IQ thesis reduced to absurdity. *Homo sapiens* is finite in time, finite in space, finite in everything. Why should the young of the species be held infinite in something called "educability"?

Neither Hart nor Schwebel has much to say on the all-important question of political routes to educational innovation. Robert Bendiner has written, not a study of schools and politics, which is an immensely sprawling topic if covered adequately, but a much smaller work on the American school board. It is the best book of its kind now available, and is directly relevant to the efforts of our country's 115,000 school board members (most of them one-termers) whose investment of time in the matter of school governance is, even on a generous estimate, about 95 per cent futile. Bendiner's study fleshes out in useful detail the salient and well-known characteristic of local American school boards: that their chief power is to prevent change, and

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their chief weakness, inability to innovate —which obviously comprise two sides of one coin.

Bendiner is good on the theme that "we have come to a point in our affairs when the political entity of the city no longer coincides with the overriding social facts of where people work and live," and that school politics must be adjusted accordingly; but he is shaky on the all-important matter of federal clout, finance and initiative. We are one nation working toward one national system of education. There will always be room for citizens' involvement in educational policy, and schools should be allowed to blossom variously like the flowers in the field; but the American local school board as we now know it is merely a 19th-century remnant.

Easily one of our five or six best educational critics, John Holt begins where writers like Hart and Schwebel leave off. He is always worth reading. *The Underachieving School*, a collection of his recent brief pieces, repeats many of the ideas advanced in his earlier books, and indicates that if anything he is getting more radicalized. Holt believes that

> children learn better when they learn what they want to learn when they want to learn it, and how they want to learn it, learning for their own curiosity and not at somebody else's order. I believe that learning would be greatly improved if we could completely or at least largely abolish the fixed curriculum in its present sense. I do not believe that testing and grading form any inherent or useful function in learning; in fact, they corrupt and impede the learning process. I am altogether opposed to any kind of so-called ability grouping in school. I think that in many more cases than not it is the act of instruction itself that impedes learning and nowhere else more than in the field of reading; in short, I feel that children would learn to read better and more easily if they were not taught.

What lies behind these and other views is not only a deep conviction that most human learning is a self-initiating and self-correcting effort at constructive mastery of the environment but also an outspoken disgust with much that now defines the American environment (racism, the capitalist rat race, fear of genuine freedom). Is there a contradiction here? Can a demeaning environment spawn self-correcting children? Holt would not concede a contradiction. He sees our schools as jails for corrupting the young, who would not otherwise be bent so crookedly.

In a small rural school, in a remote part of northern New Zealand, Elwyn Richardson spent ten years learning how to become a true teacher. Apparently, he had a nearly free hand. His remarkable achievement is conveyed in a little gem of a book, *In the Early World*, first published in 1964, one of those rare books in the history of pedagogy of which it can boldly be said that it is good, true and beautiful. The American edition, lavishly illustrated with linoleum cuts, drawings and photographs, is a bargain at $7.95 and will make an ideal gift for elementary schoolteachers.

By itself, *In the Early World* will not teach teachers to do what Richardson did. He seems to be a rare human being, a man with an artistic-scientific bent and a feel for nature, a man whose rejection of sham and whose search for the honest expression of insight is remorseless. Somehow, he learned to create a free classroom atmosphere at the Oruaiti school where this view would prevail and evoke the best efforts of children. An 8-year-old girl wrote this story:

Cakes

> When Mum bakes cakes I watch her, but when she gets mad at me she tells me to set the table so she can get rid of me for a while. If I finish before her she tells me to go to play and I feel mad at Mum because I have to go to play. The one thing I like is watching Mum bake cakes. I don't know why but I do.

To sophisticated and worldly adults this may not sound like much; but anyone who has spent time in an elementary classroom and values honest writing will know at once that this is what "language arts" is all about. And this is only a sample. In this self-contained single-teacher Oruaiti classroom the children became first-rate potters, wrote splendid poetry, and made linocuts so strong and so filled with the vitality of childhood that they seem to spring into life off the pages.

"Night Faces" by Clifton. From In the Early World. *Copyright 1964 by The New Zealand Council for Educational Research.*

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Is Richardson's work generalizable to the schools of New York, Los Angeles and Akron? Perhaps, if we could find half a million Richardsons and snare them into the classrooms. In our population of 200 million I do believe that they can be found, but our present pedagogical establishment would soon begin assiduously to weed them out, and most of our parents would not raise a whimper. One key to Richardson's success may be the total absence in his book of anything deeply controversial on the level of mores and manners. (The chapter on social studies is the weakest.) He stuck with nature and art, and he worked small miracles.

And now a few words about a harmless bit of fluff. Those who have the easiest time writing books are the psychotherapists and psychiatrists. The average case load will yield at least one volume every two years; the typical psychologist's book is stuffed with sage anecdotage, like Gorki's grandmother. Button, a part-time psychotherapist, has written *The Authentic Child* in the genre, a sane but dreary understanding-and-love parent educational manual, brought up to date with references to pot and Peace Corps, and laced with the usual psychotherapeutic chitchat. "Denied humanity" is the enemy and "developmental freedom" is the goal. The trouble with these books is that those who might be tempted to read them really don't need them, while those who might gain from the message either can't or won't. A far-gone parent with psychological hang-ups does not develop freedom by reading a book.

Will anyone be helped by these books on education? Many will be inspired by reading *In the Early World*, but whether this is "help" or not I do not know. Some parts of some of the others may help a little. How very little, when all is said and done, have books on education altered what goes on in schools, and how very much cultures do impose their purposes on the schools. And yet it seems to me that there is a deep purpose in teaching and learning which persists and will persist through many cultural changes. Friedrich Froebel was a great 19th-century educational philosopher and apostle of free self-activity as the basis of all education. Despite his being mystically wrapped up in Germanic god-seeking, he defined the chief purpose of teaching in a way that all great educators eventually come to see it. That purpose is

> to bring ever more *out* of man rather than to put more and more *into* him; for that which can get *into* man we already know and possess as the property of mankind, and every one, simply because he is a human being, will unfold and develop it out of himself in accordance with the laws of mankind. On the other hand, what yet is to come *out* of mankind, what human nature is yet to develop, that we do not yet know, that is not yet the property of mankind.

Richardson and Holt know this; they know it in their bones. But most of the rest of us don't. The point, the real point in all our current debates on schools, machines, the IQ, and the rest is the agonizingly slow pace at which our late welfare capitalist culture is moving away from its view of man as a cog who must be measured, trained, disciplined, and shaped to become an upwardly mobile achiever-consumer to a different view of man that is congenial with Froebel's definition, a man whose human nature is yet to be developed. It is the tragic limitation of elementary and secondary schools, and those who teach in them, that they cannot impose this definition on a culture not yet ready for it. □

Lost at Sea

VOYAGER: A Life of Hart Crane. *By John Unterecker. Farrar, Straus & Giroux. 787 pp. $15.*

ALAN TRACHTENBERG
Mr. Trachtenberg is currently teaching at Yale University as a visitor in English and American Studies.

Like his poetry with its troughs and tunnels of despair and its towering heights of exaltation, Hart Crane's life was a constant and finally exhausting shuttle between heaven and hell. Crane seemed to be governed by a fatality: always to court the very things denied to him by the nature of his existence. He wanted love and acceptance from his divorced parents, who steadily failed him as he failed them; he wanted recognition as a serious poet from a society which could scarcely read his words; he wanted reassurance from friends who found it increasingly difficult to put up with his trials and great demands upon their affection.

Crane's life was shaped by powerful, irresolvable conflicts which drove him finally to suicide in 1932, shortly before his 33rd birthday. By themselves the two overriding commitments of his life, to poetry and to homosexual love, cut him off from the comfortable assurances and acceptance he needed. The romantic trope of the fallen angel was his way of life. The simultaneous experience of beauty and anguish became an arch necessity: he seemed to cultivate instabilities in order to feed his hope to transcend them. In "For the Marriage of Faustus and Helen" he wrote, "There is the world dimensional for those untwisted by the love of things irreconcilable." A better motto for the ironies of his own travail can hardly be imagined.

In Crane's life one can make out all the features of a "case," the artist as neurotic, the provincial succumbing, as he put it, to "the City's complicated devastations," the angelic poet destroyed by American materialism, and so on. John Unterecker avoids any thesis of this sort, except to see Crane as he saw himself, as a "voyager."

Unterecker's biography is an unflinching account of the wreckage of Crane's life. The essential details had been recorded before—in biographies by Philip Horton (1937) and Brom Weber (1948), and in Weber's edition of Crane's letters (1952). With access to considerable new material—letters to and from Crane, memoirs by friends, interviews—Unterecker fills out the picture without significantly altering the main contours. The gain over the earlier books is in the mass of documentary items, the placing of the letters within a narrative context, and the firsthand accounts of specific episodes made available by Crane's living friends.

The record of Crane's youth in Cleveland is especially enlightening about the formation of his ideas and attitudes about art and popular American culture. Crane's intense seriousness about poetry, his enthusiastic defense of *avant-garde* art against Philistinism, and his always somewhat innocent hunger for cosmopolitan experiences can be seen in part as reflexes of Midwest provincialism in the days of Mencken. Like Sherwood Anderson, with whom he had a youthful correspondence, Crane was both drawn toward and repelled by the Midwest of family businesses, sprawling houses, holiday reunions.

Unterecker has etched more sharply than the earlier biographers the details of Crane's shifting and tortured relations with his parents, both of whom are treated with sympathy and grace, without overt judgment. A quality of doom seemed to hang over all three persons, as if in their wounding exposures and recriminations they were enacting a drama by O'Neill. At his death Crane was totally estranged from his neurasthenic and overdemanding mother, but had achieved a reconciliation with his father. Part of Crane was capable of a sentimental yearning for the solid middle-class normality his father represented. On the matter of Crane's homosexuality Unterecker is quite frank, making use of previously restricted material with tact and discretion. We now have a more

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complete picture of this often brutal, and often ecstatic, side of Crane's life.

What Unterecker provides is a close-up, a sharpening of focus, something like the marvelous (and as far as I know previously unpublished) photograph by Walker Evans in which Crane's open, sad face, lined and blotched and vulnerable, looks tiredly out at us. The book itself is photographic in many ways; it seeks to reproduce faithfully and free of editorial distortion the known and the knowable facts of the poet's career.

Much of the book is in the form of Crane's letters, which comprise a virtual autobiography in their own right; his cry for love and his faith in language were such that he devoted an amazing energy in correspondence, setting down experiences and ideas in lavish, almost compulsive detail, in order to share them. Unterecker relies too on a chorus of friends, whose perspectives do not always agree, but whose accounts serve to bring one feature or another into view. The result is a composite image, a multivoiced evocation of Hart Crane. Unterecker bestows upon the poet a *presence* rare in literary biographies.

He has tracked down what seems like every available shred and scrap of evidence of Crane's existence, and very little is left out of the book. At first the staggering weight of detail—the inventories of possessions, of parties and dinners, of troubles and plagues, the petty shifts for money and affection, the assaults on mind and body of hives, boils, hay fever, "acidosis," toothache—may seem excessive and pointless, nearly 800 pages of narrative, letters, memoirs, interviews. But then it becomes clear that Unterecker's intention could allow for no other method.

What may seem a failure to discriminate, to spare the reader the oppressive "thisness" of Crane's daily existence, actually represent the author's wish to get into writing what the life felt like, to Crane himself and to those with whom his life was meshed. Beyond what is implied by the title, the image of a voyager in quest of a harbor, Unterecker declines the obvious temptation to impose an analysis, an interpretation. The book is a gesture of acceptance toward Crane, a gesture so complete, so tender, as to suggest the book was written as much *for* Crane as about him.

This is not achieved without some expense. Part of Unterecker's calculation is never to allow Crane's poems to occupy the center of interest, except as the writing of poems documents phases of the biography. The book has many shrewd and helpful authorial comments about specific poems, but it does not undertake any systematic discussion, nor does it attempt to estimate Crane's standing within American and modern literature. Enormous respect for his achievement informs the entire book, but this is a study of a poet, not of poetry. Crane's aesthetic ideas, the influence of specific figures past and present, the impact made upon him by the pioneering works of modernism by Joyce and Eliot—all of this is present in *Voyager*, but always in the context of Crane's personal life.

It is a testimony to the accuracy of Crane's instinct about the pulse of the times that his biography must also be to a large extent the biography of a period, its intellectual issues and its emotional possibilities. Crane's involvement with the literary culture of New York in the 1920s was so rich that it is disappointing that Unterecker does not deal more extensively with the setting and the issues themselves.

Crane was torn in his artistic commitments between the traditionalism and irony of Eliot and Pound, and the spiritual, nativist optimism of Whitman, Stieglitz and Waldo Frank. The history of *The Bridge*, its conception and the long years of composition (roughly from 1923 to 1930), contains in capsule form the history of major literary currents and debates. Unterecker provides the materials for such a history, but they are diffused within the chronology of the life, and there is little effort to link those materials with larger issues, beyond what is implicit in Crane's own comments. One misses an evaluation of the intrinsic importance of specific ideas and doctrines, a distinction between valuable and half-baked notions (of which there were many in Crane's shifting circles)—in short, a more strenuously defined intellectual context for a reading of the poems.

In a study of poetry, biography takes its place as an interesting but finally secondary matter, a fact *of* the poems, but not the only fact. A poem is an act of language, not of flesh; we might even say that a successful poem does not subsume the poet but effaces him.

One of the motives of the modernist movement was an attempt to reclaim from late romanticism an image of the poet as craftsman, a "maker" who holds his personality out of view. To be a poet would no longer entail a certain erratic style of life but simply the making of poems, even if the maker spent the rest of his time in a bank, a doctor's office or an insurance company. The doctrine of the impersonality of the poem, the exclusion of rampant subjectivity, was for the sake of returning the locus of interest from the poet's personality to the poem itself, virtually as a piece of mechanics.

Crane's own idea of "absolute poetry" and "the logic of metaphor" was formed in light of the modernist self-consciousness about language. He strove for a metaphoric language designed to wrench the reader free of ordinary associations and uses of words, to transport him to a realm of extraordinary feeling and meaning. Unterecker makes clear with what seriousness and competence Crane took craft and technique; his poems are among the most complex verbal constructions of modern poetry.

But Crane also took seriously the idea of poetry as a way of life, a full-time vocation. Village bohemianism provided a convenient model, though hardly an adequate one. A major component of Crane's tragedy was his failure to discover (and American society to provide) a role in which he might become the complete and absolute poet he wished to be. Perhaps the wish itself was futile; he wanted to serve as a vatic poet but lacked the kind of audience that, say, Allen Ginsberg has created for himself. Crane drifted, then, under the pressure of deep personal tensions, into a life of violent fluctuation, of deliberate discouragement, of desperate search for more stimulants.

In the case of Crane, then, biography does provide one of the essential contexts for poetry. Crane's poems conform to the pattern of his personal life more strikingly than is true of other modern American poets, thus justifying Unterecker's concern with the genesis of poems, "the ways personal material is worked and reworked until it is no longer personal." A residue of the private does remain. From the point of view of criticism Unterecker's book is enormously valuable for its sensitive chronicle of the conditions out of which Crane's poems emerged, especially the monumental attempt at harmony and reconciliation in *The Bridge*.

It is clear that the sources of Crane's talent lay in the buried contradictions of his life. He took the world *personally;* and vulnerability to loss, betrayal and pain is a key motif in his work. He was also capable of exaltation, of illuminating his darkness with sudden access of light. This fluctuation or instability is not only a condition from which his verse springs; it is also the major, one might say the sole, theme of his work. His poetry is lyric in the sense that it always speaks of the intensely personal experience of the "I" struggling toward an affirmation in the face of a negativity—toward the bridge out of the tunnel, toward the tower out of the pit.

While Unterecker's book may not help much with the difficulties of Crane's idiom, its high virtue is that it shows the material, contradictory "I" out of which the lyric voice is made. Not the least of Crane's contradictions was his desire to

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uphold a positive, affirmative outlook, while his own life was a reproachful mockery of his hopes. "It interests me still to affirm certain things," he wrote, and claimed an identification with "all of life." In *The Bridge* he attempted to project that identification, which is a lyric emotion, into an epic scale—once more pointing up and trying to resolve a contradiction, between private and public experience.

Throughout the 1920s, while the unfinished edifice of *The Bridge* gave at least a focus and goal to his life, he was able to sustain enough of a balance between his creative and destructive impulses to produce a significant (though slim) body of poetry. Alternating in his moods, he was able for a few years to fling off the oppressive weight of private troubles with heady excursions into love or poetry. But with his troubles upon him, and Unterecker lets us know exactly how oppressive they were, Crane relied more and more on flights into oblivion. His balance was never a reliable equilibrium; at best he might hold his doom at bay, but could not defeat his obsessive conflicts.

Hart Crane jumped from the *Orizaba* in April 1932. Suicide must have appeared to him an act of kindness toward the ragged remains of an ego so ravaged by alcohol, by lust and violence, that it seemed indeed a "terrible puppet" of evil desires. Crane wished to obliterate a life which had become fiercely unbearable. True, he had retrieved from those sordid and violent days in Mexico one of his finest lyrics, "The Broken Tower," but how much longer could he return to the flame and hope to win a "bright logic" such as this?

The unshakable impression of *Voyager* is that in the end Crane's capacity for poetry lay crippled under the debris of his personal life. Rehabilitation would have required a greater strength than he any longer seemed to have. On his father's gravestone in Garrettsville, Ohio, Crane's name and dates are inscribed with the words "lost at sea." Another epitaph might be the words of one of his friends, "God help us all, what a life is this!" □

the myth of the Judeo-Christian tradition

and other dissenting essays

by ARTHUR A. COHEN

Are Christians and Jews theological enemies? Is the so-called Judeo-Christian tradition a myth created by Christian guilt and Jewish neurosis?

Yes, the author of *The Natural and Supernatural Jew* says firmly. In this book, Mr. Cohen examines the myth, its uses and dishonesties. Some of the essays (like those on Toynbee and Thurston N. Davis, S.J.) are heated, others conciliatory and prophetic. A number have appeared in national magazines and stirred controversy. All are provocative and intellectually exciting

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A Dedicated Madness

ODYSSEY OF A FRIEND: Whittaker Chambers' Letters to William F. Buckley, Jr., 1954-1961. *(Edited by Mr. Buckley.)* *G. P. Putnam's Sons. 303 pp. $6.95.*

DAVID CORT

Mr. Cort was a fellow student and colleague of Whittaker Chambers at Columbia University and Time, Inc. He is the author of The Glossy Rats *(Grosset & Dunlap).*

The ghost of the late Whittaker Chambers declines to rest in peace, and for very good reasons. He magnificently played a child's game of masquerade, and too many adults believed in him. Richard M. Nixon believed, and in ultimate consequence became the President of the United States. William Frank Buckley, Jr. of *National Review* still keeps a nonpareil faith and love and has brought out a whole book (first privately printed, now regularly published) of Chambers' letters to him from 1954 to 1961, when his correspondent became extinct.

Whittaker Chambers was not the name of the man, but just the most convenient of a dozen or so aliases. The name, if you care, was Jay Vivian Chambers. In this book of progressively less posturing letters to a friend one begins to detect that he never called anything by its right name, being deeply involved in an old secret game of pretenses and false faces. Since few people are accustomed to a world of deceits, Chambers' iridescent bluffs and impostures were a smash hit and encouraged him to higher effort.

An authentic persona rises out of these letters. Here is a man who glibly quotes Latin, German, Russian (his formal education was highly sketchy); cites books one has never heard of; makes "Boyg" a synonym for mirage (I give up); calls himself one of the Narodniki (an obsolete term that may denote the Serb assassins of 1914); affects to be part Dostoevski and part 19th-century English Duke (not the younger son, the Duke himself); and makes an appointment to meet at Renoir's "Girl With the Watering Can" at the National Gallery.

This continuous performance required considerable energy and self-discipline. From such an outpouring, one expects to find a human being, but (apart from brief attitudes as farmer, assassin, father, friend) there is nothing there. Behind the dubious literary feast, not of good bread but of indigestible delicatessen, is a disappearing act. The way to disappear is to produce boxes within boxes, that is, intellectual narcissism.

Some selections, lifted from the boxes:

> Almost the only position of spiritual dignity left to men, therefore, is a kind of stoic silence.

But for the Socialist Apparat . . . they stand within an inch of closing the capitalist phase of history . . . and of rooting their power in the vast, fertilizing, dinosauric corpse.

If we should be so far gone in historical corruption as to outlaw the Bombs, gas, bacteria et al., the Communists will merely win over the slower haul.

Essences—a word I never permit myself to use.

Brilliant staff—no, brilliant is a Woolworth word . . . [then about the members of the staff] I shall lock away in Pandora's box any reservations I have about them . . . [the box immediately flies open] in one instance, a tinkling, a play of caprice . . . and in the other instance, I fear a tone-deafness . . . [very skilled, low-key assassination, especially since it is already locked in Pandora's box].

Briefly, I remain a dialectician.

Perhaps *the* great sin is to say: it will heal; it has healed; there is no wound [contradicting the earlier "stoic silence"].

[And now as if describing himself] No lunatic is more frightening, and perhaps more dangerous, than the one in whom a dedicated madness is largely masked by what we call normality.

I am saying that conservatism and

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> capitalism are mutually exclusive manifestations. . . . I hold capitalism to be profoundly anti-conservative.

This last, incidentally, would destroy *National Review*.

Of course all his politics was a fantasy. The only reality behind it was that he hated Franklin D. Roosevelt and all his works. His mother, a welfare worker, was so sure the United States was about to collapse and vanish from the world that she took her retirement benefits in cash, rather than as a pension, at a considerable loss. The son accepted this apocalyptic vision, and the eschatological remained his specialty.

In his youth, I am certain, he aspired to an aristocratic panache which was beyond his daring. But in these letters he openly exhibits it to Buckley. He exhibits as well something contrary: his genius for flattering civility, here extended at such length to Buckley that one can tell he could not bear to keep it hidden. That genius is even better exemplified in an earlier communication to Henry R. Luce, reproduced in Meyer Zeligs' *Friendship and Fratricide* (not included, of course, in this book): "Your speech is a simple, authentic testimony of the spirit. . . . It is a voice with which I have seldom been privileged to hear you speak, and it moves me deeply. I may not intrude upon it. . . . It proceeds from the spirit, and the mode of the Christian spirit is simplicity. God bless you, Harry." Reading this, poor Luce must have felt that he was in church.

The mode of the Chambers spirit was not simplicity. He was progressively an atheist, Episcopalian, Quaker, and finally attended the Catholic Church. These were all masquerades, but acted out to the end, to his wife and children, perhaps even to himself. The point is important. He was not an unconscious, instinctive fake. He knew he was a fake, but he was such a consummate actor, so dedicated to his art, that perhaps he was taken in by his own fakery.

His favorite quotation, used I think three times in these letters, is from Aeschylus: "We have come to the last path of the earth, in the Scythian country, in the untrodden solitude." (Scythia was the ancients' name for what is now Russia, or rather, the Ukraine.) Chambers' deformed obsession with anti-communism received astonishingly widespread support, Left, Right and Center. He succeeded in making a comedy of intellectual thinking today. (This volume contains a foreword by Ralph de Toledano to prove the guilt of Alger Hiss. Experts —of which I am not one—inform me that this little masterpiece wildly misrepresents the trial evidence, to nobody's amazement. Hiss could have been guilty, without in any way affecting the facts about Whittaker Chambers.)

Chambers' end in 1961 was supposedly by heart attack. The final letters in this book unintentionally, I hope, support the hypothesis that Chambers committed suicide. As his son's marriage approaches, the letters get briefer. Chambers writes that he told his son that so-and-so might be assassinated, and the son replied, "Nothing would delight him more." The final letter, before the son's marriage, recites a list of noble suicides. Evidently he had transposed his destiny to the innocent son. He would have killed himself, I suppose, to rid the son of the guilt of Alger Hiss and of the vengeance that, in his paranoiac vision, was about to fall. By dying at that moment, one month after his son's marriage, he would secede from the House of Atreus. Superbly noble, romantic, clever, classic and nuts. □

Our National Insecurity

THE ECONOMY OF DEATH. *By Richard J. Barnet. Atheneum Publishers. 201 pp. $4.95. Paper $2.95.*

THE POLITICS OF WEAPONS INNOVATION: The Thor-Jupiter Controversy. *By Michael H. Armacost. Columbia University Press. 304 pp. $10.*

RICHARD F. KAUFMAN

Mr. Kaufman is on the staff of the subcommittee on Economy in Government, chaired by Sen. William Proxmire, which has been investigating profits and costs in defense procurement. His book on war profiteering will be published by Bobbs-Merrill this year.

Richard J. Barnet's *The Economy of Death* is "a taxpayer's guide to national security," in the tradition of the popular guides to socialism, capitalism, world chaos, modern politics, and science written by George Bernard Shaw, G.D.H. Cole, Lancelot Hogben and other British intellectuals in the first half of the century. Like the Fabians, Barnet believes that the average citizen can understand and make intelligent decisions about important public issues if he has the facts. His book is an argument against present military policies and an appeal to the people for change.

He has two general theses. First, that the basic assumptions underlying defense policy are in error and do not serve the national interest. Starting with the principal premise that more nuclear weapons means more national security, the United States has simply failed to come to terms with the basic fact of modern international relations: no nation in the nuclear age can be secure from physical annihilation.

> The issue is not whether the Soviet Union is or is not a dangerous power to coexist with on the planet. Unquestionably the Soviet Union is dangerous. Any power that is in a nuclear arms race with us is a threat. The real issue is whether building more nuclear weapons increases or decreases the threat to national security.

The United States now has 4,500 nuclear warheads aimed at the Soviet Union (compared to 1,700 Soviet missiles aimed at us), enough to devastate its five major metropolitan areas and 145 other cities (with populations of 100,000 or more) several times over. Barnet concludes that we have enough nuclear deterrence, that building new strategic weapons systems such as the hydra-headed new generation of intercontinental ballistic missiles (MIRV), besides escalating the arms race and creating a war climate, suggests an intent to establish a first-strike (sneak attack) capability on *our* part. The results of America's continual efforts to up the nuclear ante, under the guise of the bomber gap, the missile gap and the ABM gap, has been a net loss of security and a waste of billions of dollars.

Similarly with our nonnuclear arsenal of conventional weapons and capabilities. This part of the defense budget, called "General Purpose Forces," absorbs $50 billion a year and pays for an army larger than that of the Soviet Union or China, 430 major foreign bases, fifteen attack aircraft carriers which the Navy is in the process of replacing with nuclear-powered models at a cost of about $1.5 billion each (the Soviet Union has no attack carriers), 33,000 aircraft, and more than 300,000 troops with 200,000 dependents stationed in Europe alone. This huge military juggernaut is not intended to defend the United States from foreign aggression—a much smaller American-based force would be sufficient for that purpose—and it would be useless in a nuclear war. Why then does it exist, and why should the taxpayer support it?

The official explanation is that our conventional forces are deployed to fulfill our national commitments to help forty-two nations resist external attack. Barnet points out how recurrently U.S. military might has been employed, not to defend our allies from attack but to defend unpopular and usually corrupt gov-

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ernments from their own people. He cites our interventions in Greece, Iran, Guatemala, Lebanon, Cuba, the Congo, British Guiana, the Dominican Republic, Bolivia, Peru and Colombia.

In each of these countries we intervened with troops or equipment or both to fight a war of "counterinsurgency." While the shibboleth of "resisting Communist expansion" is invariably used to justify intervention, most of the world believes, Barnet says, that the real reasons for U.S. military activities abroad are economic. "We are trying to preserve our access to raw materials, markets, and profitable investments. In short, we are practicing gunboat diplomacy in modern dress."

Barnet's second thesis is that American society is dominated by a complex of military and civilian institutions, whose mutual interests reinforce one another. "The result is a government whose central activity is planning and carrying out wars." This is, of course, the theory of the military-industrial complex which Barnet sees as including not only the military establishment and the defense industry but an elite group of about 400 individuals who have since 1940 occupied the top civilian national-security positions, and whom he calls the National Security Managers: "the politicians, businessmen, and civil servants who rotate through the paneled offices of the Pentagon, the State Department, the Central Intelligence Agency, the Atomic Energy Commission, and the White House."

Defense policy is conducted by the uniformed military but it is formulated by the National Security Managers, a breed of civilian bureaucratic and business descendants of Henry Stimson, James V. Forrestal and Dean Acheson. They learned their trades in World War II and were convinced by Hitler that international relations are established by force and that the safest nations are the ones with the most weapons. Over the years these men have drifted in and out of government, from their posh law firms, banks and corporate board rooms to key posts in the agencies directing national security programs.

The defense industry, in Barnet's view, plays a subordinate role, holding only a junior partnership with the Pentagon. "In the Department of Defense the leading defense contractors are regarded as subsidiaries that must be protected for the benefit of the whole system." With the line between the government and the private sector obliterated by the un-free-enterprise dynamics of military contracting, business is quite satisfied with the prevailing form of military socialism which produces fat contracts, minimal competition and risks, and high profits.

Barnet may be understating the influence of the large contractors (whose highest officials are frequently drawn from the military hierarchy as well as the National Security Managers). My own view is that the defense industry plays a greater part in the making of military policy. It is true that a company which depends almost entirely on defense contracts for its existence seems to be subject to the power of the Pentagon. In practice, however, it is often the other way around. One of the most notorious cases of military subservience to a contractor is found in the Army's relations with Western Electric (a subsidiary of AT&T). Western Electric captured the Army's anti-aircraft business in 1945 and its anti-ballistic-missile business about ten years later. Varying degrees of military dependency may also be found in the Navy's relationship with Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Co., which has an absolute monopoly on attack aircraft carriers and is developing one on all nuclear-powered ships, and the Air Force's relationship with General Electric and Westinghouse, which have a near monopoly on aircraft engines.

This is the sort of matter which one might have expected Michael Armacost to have pursued in *The Politics of Weapons Innovation: The Thor-Jupiter Controversy*. Unfortunately, Armacost's case study of the contest during the 1950s between two intermediate range ballistic-missile systems makes a pass at but mostly skirts the issue of contractor influence. It does not fully enough explore the lengths to which the Air Force's aerospace contractors went to destroy the Army's in-house capability. Armacost, concentrating on the rivalry between the Army and the Air Force for the IRBM mission, has gathered a wealth of detail on one of our first big missile messes, but his book is guided by too little insight.

The burden of Armacost's argument is that C. P. Snow was wrong in concluding that in the advanced countries decisions about military technology are necessarily made in an environment of closed politics. In *Science and Government* Snow said that such decisions are made "by a handful of men; in secret; and at least in legal form, by men who cannot have a first-hand knowledge of what those choices depend upon or what their results may be." This need not be, Armacost maintains, because "in those instances where service rivalry is a significant factor in weapons innovation, participation is nowhere so limited, the absence of an attentive public so complete, secrecy so impenetrable, or the dichotomy between politicians and experts so stark as Lord Snow has portrayed them."

Armacost's apparent goal is laudable enough: opening the closed politics of weapons systems to a range of decision makers and political influences somewhat broader than what Snow described. But his solution is questionable indeed. Interservice rivalry for weapons systems seems to me to be the most distorted form of political pluralism. For when the direct beneficiaries of defense programs —the military, the contractors and their clients in Congress—get to compete for control of public funds, the general public is as much excluded as ever.

The Thor-Jupiter case is an especially revealing example. Panicked by the thought that the loser might be left without a major role in nuclear warfare, the armed services sabotaged one another, pirated manpower, and withheld their technical information. The lengthy schedule delays, cost overruns, and performance failures of both missiles were in large measure attributable to the inefficient process of weapons procurement. Interservice rivalry compounded the difficulties and the costs. In the end, the missiles turned out to be obsolete before they were deployed and most of our allies in Europe, where they were supposed to have been planted, refused to have them. The total cost of this double disaster was $2.2 billion (a fact Arma-

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cost does not mention). The Air Force, in case anyone is interested, won. But the public lost.

More important, Armacost fails to turn his attention to the violence done to the American political and economic system by the institutional arrangements which have made commonplace such bad decisions as the one to go ahead with Thor-Jupiter in the first place. One of the virtues of Barnet's *Economy of Death* is that it analyzes these arrangements and offers some guidance on how they may be transformed for useful, life-giving ends.

Barnet's book is much the better critique, for he performs the valuable service of piercing the façade of excuses for extending our military power. He identifies the sources and the real costs of present policy. "The American people cannot afford imperialism, either financially or spiritually, without the nation ceasing to function as a democratic state." □

FILMS

ROBERT HATCH

Unless they have special knowledge of, and interest in, Catholic dogma and schismatic controversy, viewers of Luis Buñuel's *The Milky Way* will probably enjoy it more as a travel film than as a moral tract or a work of imagination. And at that level the film offers real pleasures. The countryside and architecture are beautiful and the sets are rich in curious detail (I found the color often coarse); the performers are idiosyncratic and coached to a witty proficiency of mime and dance; scene by scene, the action is almost always perfectly explicit and often excitingly bizarre. What we lack, most of us, is a master plan that would place these vignettes significantly in the long history of the Mother Church. Buñuel brings an informed scorn to the subject of ecclesiastical perversity that few of his audience will be in a position to appreciate.

They may be the less disposed to try because Buñuel's human enemies, however malign, are centuries dead: no one today, in the Church or out, attempts to justify mutilation and death on grounds of dogmatic hairsplitting. And it is noticeable that the manifestations of the supernatural in modern dress—the devil, his familiars, a succubus, the angel of death—have about them an air of camp triviality that assorts badly with the historical evocations. If Buñuel sees himself at war with Catholicism today, his reasons are not apparent—at least to one who cannot draw allusions from his scholarship.

So one spins along with the picaresque spunkiness of his tableaux. *The Milky Way* is a pilgrimage through space and time. Two vagrants—Paul Frankeur and Laurent Terzieff—are on the road from the south of France to the shrine of Santiago de Compostela in Spain. I judge that their goal is not spiritual, but the anticipation of ready alms in the neighborhood of the saint. At any rate, they display the hobo's sturdy indifference to anything that does not culminate in handouts of money, food or transportation, and are thus unaffected by the miraculous anachronisms that they stumble into at every station of their progress. They enjoy watching a good fight or an ingenious execution, they marvel at bizarre processions; but meat, wine and outwitting the constabulary are their concern. That may be at least part of Buñuel's overall theme—food and shelter have ever been the people's faith; battles over the true word of God are fought outside their ken and they are at most the ignorant victims of bigotry. But then I don't know how to interpret the scene at the end when the fiendish temptress takes them flying into the deep woods.

It is no little fun to watch Buñuel's sly heroes slipping through the cracks in space-time, but I was chastened by the realization that a well-instructed seminarian—if he survived the shock of seeing Christ as a political opportunist (Buñuel, who is devoted to the Virgin, has no use for her Son)—would relish the wit and ingenuity, and perhaps the moral, of this ecclesiastical vaudeville at a depth far beyond my capacity. □

DANCE/Nancy Goldner

Miss Goldner, who will be writing regularly on dance for The Nation, *studied under George Balanchine at the School of American Ballet. For the past two years she has written dance criticism for* Dance News, Saisons de la Danse *and* The Christian Science Monitor.

Yuri Grigorovich's new *Swan Lake*, which had its première at Moscow's Bolshoi Theatre on December 25, and which I saw during its initial run there, is probably the newest *Swan Lake* playing anywhere. The ballet not only has new scenery and costumes but virtually new choreography. Much time, energy and money have gone into the endeavor, and I kept asking myself why.

Why produce a new *Swan Lake*? Either because you want to reinterpret the story or because you feel that the original Ivanov and Petipa choreography can be improved. With one exception, Grigorovich made no move to reinterpret or modernize the plot—which is just as well, since fairy tales have an intrinsic rightness and an innate resistance to change. That is why everybody loves them. Grigorovich did tamper with the plot at the end, and it was a disaster. The swan-maiden Odette and Prince Siegfried, rather than sacrifice their lives for love, now manage by clinging together to overcome the evil magician's powers, and are not driven to that dramatic and beautiful plunge into the lake. The possibility of happiness on earth may be good Communist doctrine, but it does not sit well with a lover of fairy tales or, for that matter, with anyone who is moved by the romantic impulse. The new ending is not controversial; it is just wrongheaded.

Grigorovich did take it upon himself, however, to rechoreograph just about everything—in the program, Ivanov and Petipa are called "other choreographers." He also switched much of the music around, so that in the famous glittering Black Swan *pas de deux*, Natalia Bessmertnova found herself dancing to mournful music of the last "white" act, while the music of Siegfried's big solo was demoted to some ensemble business in the first act. The scenes of court life and many bits of stage business in Act I were in large part supplanted by a long dance for Siegfried and two girls, which did not develop the plot or reveal the prince's character. For example, it was no longer clear that Siegfried is supposed to find a bride and that only upon meeting Odette can he shake off his indifference to the project. It was not even evident that behind all this marriage talk was Siegfried's mother, a strong-willed lady. Nor were we shown that the evil magician, Von Rothbart, had to bamboozle his way into the court and the Queen Mother's confidence so that he could deceive Siegfried into thinking that his daughter, dressed in black, was actually the beautiful Odette.

The national dances that occur later in the ballet were denationalized in favor of generalized virtuoso choreography. The list of changes and modifications could go on and on. The overall effect was bland, when it was not jarring. Generally, Grigorovich has put more dancing into *Swan Lake*, at the expense of mime. I would not have thought

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that this shift of emphasis, made presumably to satisfy modern taste, would serve to dilute a ballet; that such matters as the glances between the Queen Mother and Von Rothbart are, in fact, arias essential to the work.

Poor direction is one thing, but why scrap great choreography? It has been done before, but not with Grigorovich's zeal. The Bolshoi Ballet has not staged an authentic *Swan Lake* for years. It would have been wiser and more mature to acknowledge the geniuses of the past, to mount the real *Swan Lake* in the country where it was born. Although the new *Swan Lake* hardly supports the opinion, Grigorovich is considered to be the Bolshoi's star choreographer, the man of the future. In that case, he should be doing new ballets, not mangling old ones. If the Bolshoi is to be a viable institution —and for that it needs more than its dancers—it must not rework, but preserve the classics and create new ballets out of the present.

Last May, Jerome Robbins choreographed a masterpiece called *Dances at a Gathering*, to the music of Chopin. As I was walking into the New York State Theater to see *In the Night*, his current exploration into Chopin, I cautioned myself not to compare the two ballets, recalling the aesthetic rule that each creative endeavor is a thing unto itself. So as soon as the curtain went up I began to compare, and before I knew it quantitative comparisons led to qualitative ones. *Dances at a Gathering* is located on what is perhaps a sun-drenched plain; *In the Night* takes place during a starry evening. That is a statement of fact tinged with complaint: so many ballets are moon- and star-lit; how many are danced in the sun? In *Dances*, the ten performers are people-dancers who move in all kinds of groupings and whose feelings about one another are certainly happy but nevertheless ambiguous. With *In the Night*, you know exactly where you are and what you are watching. The dancers are dancers; they are lovers; there will be only *pas de deux* for three couples.

But having admitted a preference for the more spontaneous, ambiguous and daring *Dances at a Gathering*, which transcends the traditional dance-for-two structure and, likewise, the traditional view of love, it becomes possible to see the new work for what it is: an exquisite rendition of romantic love. So the aesthetic rule is observed after all, but only partially. *In the Night* is a beautiful ballet, but it would have seemed even more beautiful if I had seen it before *Dances at a Gathering*.

In the Night is set to four nocturnes. The first dance is for young lovers (Kay Mazzo and Anthony Blum), lovers for the first time. Their episode is the most secretive and lyrical of the work, full of soaring lifts. When they exit, she held aloft, the texture of the sky alters as one galaxy of stars dims and another comes into view. The second duet twists and turns, hesitates and rushes headlong. The relationship between Violette Verdy and Peter Martins, and between them and the music, is complex and personal, as lovely, troubled and spontaneous as many of the variations in *Dances at a Gathering*.

While Robbins truly made the music visible in this section, I suspect that Verdy was as responsible for its dynamic qualities. You will not find today a more subtle dancer. The third part is a lover's quarrel, with lifts acrobatic and startling in shape to suggest hotheaded dispositions. In fact, Patricia McBride walks off the stage at one point, a few moments later Francisco Moncion does the same. Soon thereafter, both "storm" off, but only as a prelude to the reconciliation, in which McBride makes the most humble obeisance to her master and is then encircled in his arms and carried off. Here is a male's fantasy to make even the mildest feminist cringe; but on a ballet stage where romantic conventions reign, a happy ending is a happy ending—very nice.

Being lovers, each couple dances in a self-contained world. In the final last section they meet for the first time and form a circle. During the closing moments of *Dances at a Gathering*, all ten dancers also form a circle, as an expression of their friendship and interdependency in the face of an unknown future. The couples of *In the Night* find that the circle does not work; it is an unnatural grouping of what are essentially families of two. The circle is quickly broken, and as the curtain falls the three pairs are strolling off the stage in opposite directions, into three different worlds. □

THEATRE

JULIUS NOVICK

A few years ago, in the course of complaining that resident-theatre managers tend to put on always the same few familiar classics, I wrote that if, for instance, a play is chosen from 18th-century England, it is almost certain to be a jolly, harmless piece like Sheridan's *The Rivals*, "although Farquhar's *The Recruiting Officer* is just as funny . . . and deals with the very interesting question of how the Army induces young men to go and die in foreign wars." Earlier this season, by a fortuitous coincidence, the Yale Repertory Theatre in New Haven revived *The Rivals*, while the Theatre of the Living Arts in Philadelphia mounted a production of *The Recruiting Officer*. Naturally, it crossed my mind that this might be an excellent occasion for a sermon that should denounce jolly-genteel classical revivalism, and acclaim a bold thrust toward relevance; but as it happened, *The Rivals* turned out much better than *The Recruiting Officer*, and my sermon will therefore have to be addressed to an entirely different set of theatrical virtues and vices from those I had in mind.

There is no "relevance" to speak of in *The Rivals*, and there probably never was; as Louis Kronenberger says, it is "thoroughly larkish, frisky, and given to playing it safe." But its good nature and high spirits are genuine; its comic contrivances of plot still work almost as well as they must have worked in 1775 when the play was new; and though many of the characters are quite clearly modeled on those of previous playwrights, a number of the main ones are still amusing, and even endearing. The Yale production was staged by Alvin Epstein, with a substantial excess of heavy-handed kissing, leering and goosing, but these always seemed like excrescences on the production, not representative of its fundamental approach. Excrescences aside, Mr. Epstein seemed to assume that if the play were presented with fidelity and

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zest, it would entertain; and, on the whole, it did.

The acting was uneven. Disturbingly, the young people in the cast, all students at the Yale Drama School or recent graduates, were mostly not good at all. The play was carried by their elders (teachers at the school—why have they not been more successful at passing on their skills?). Mrs. Malaprop, the lady of the famous "isms" ("Sir, you are the very pineapple of politeness"), can hardly fail altogether, no matter who plays her; but Elizabeth Parrish did her justice. Miss Parrish eschewed the customary Gorgonian approach, and played Mrs. Malaprop as an overblown but still voluptuous beauty. This made it seem rather odd when Captain Absolute describes her as an "old weather-beaten she-dragon," but Miss Parrish was probably wise to keep thus clear of the formidable shadow of Dame Edith Evans. As Bob Acres, the bumbling country squire who tries to make himself into a fashionable lover and duelist, Jeremy Geidt did a great deal of very clever comic business that did not seem like very clever comic business; all his antics appeared to grow naturally and spontaneously out of the appealing naïveté and good nature at the heart of the character.

There remains one more specially distinguished performance to discuss. The role of Sir Anthony Absolute, the hero's choleric father, was assigned to Jerome Kilty; but at the performance I saw, Mr. Kilty was away, and his role was assumed by none other than the dean of the Yale School of Drama and artistic director of the Yale Repertory Theatre, the intrepid Robert Brustein himself. Mr. Brustein is well known to be a man of strong convictions and he has lately had some difficulty with his unruly students, so it was indescribably funny to hear him say, as Sir Anthony, things like: "No, no, Mrs. Malaprop, Jack knows that the least demur puts me in a frenzy directly. My process was always very simple—in their younger days, 'twas 'Jack do this';—if he demurred, I knocked him down." But aside from the extrinsic dimension that his presence brought to the part, Mr. Brustein was really, really good. He has to a remarkable degree the qualities that an actor needs in order to perform in this type of play: a feeling for the words and the way they fall into cadences, an understanding of how these words and these cadences create the comic meaning of the part and the play, and the ability to fulfill the actor's function in completing this creation.

These qualities were egregiously missing from the Philadelphia revival of *The Recruiting Officer*, and as a result the production aborted. The words of a play, of course, are not everything; perhaps they are not even the essence of the matter. But they are the beginning of everything, and the essence can only be found through them. And in 18th-century comedy, the words are particularly important. Tom Bissinger, director of *The Recruiting Officer*, seemed fundamentally uninterested in the words of the play—which means fundamentally uninterested in the play itself.

I do not mean to argue for fidelity as the only legitimate directorial approach to a script, but if a director is to "confront" a classical play successfully (the term is Grotowski's), he must have, first, an intelligent understanding of the play; and, second, a coherent idea of what he wants to do with it, and why. Both of these requisites Mr. Bissinger lacked, perhaps because the second can only stem from the first. The only coherent principle behind Mr. Bissinger's production seemed to be that the attention of the audience must at all costs be distracted from the play.

The most spectacular example of this came in a scene between the hero, Captain Plume, and his prospective father-in-law, Justice Balance. The justice is borne on in a tub, and as he talks he is scrubbed by a serving wench; at intervals he interrupts the dialogue with little shrieks, to indicate, presumably, that the scrubbing has reached an erogenous zone. After this has gone on for a while, the justice rises, turns his bare buttocks to the audience and his face to the rabble of extras and bit-part players who spend most of their time lounging around onstage, and conducts this rabble in an interpolated song. Now there may be, for all I know, some play or revue into which this little parody of Peter Brook's *Marat/Sade* would fit very nicely, but here it was totally arbitrary, totally unrelated to what was supposed to be going on: it destroyed the scene as written, and left nothing in its place but a lame little *jeu d'esprit*. A succession of similar directorial brain storms destroyed the play.

My guess is that Bissinger was attracted to *The Recruiting Officer* by its cynical, anti-war aspect, and that when he found that the cynicism was really quite good-natured, and that the play, for all its occasional sharp thrusts, was more a romantic comedy than an anti-war tract, he did not know how to proceed. His show had an air of youthful, Brechtian toughness, and revealed a fitful determination to be "relevant"; but because it was fundamentally out of phase with the script, it reminded me of the chichi extravaganzas that used to pass for Shakespeare at Stratford, Conn.

The difference was that the old Stratford productions represented an effete, played-out kind of showmanship, whereas Bissinger's theatricality was at least vigorous and up to date. I distrust it as being somewhat too insistently "with it," but it suggested at least the possibility of better things. Even amid the wreckage of *The Recruiting Officer*, it was clear that Bissinger had impressively talented people working for him. Eugene Lee had designed a huge, open, untidy, spectacular setting, all sloping platforms of rough, weathered wood, covered with sawdust and stacked with crates at the back. Nancy Christofferson's supercolorful costumes looked as if they had been picked up at the Royal Rags Costume Bazaar in the East Village, only much, much more so.

The acting was less impressive, though not without interest. Frank Rounds as Captain Brazen ("Madam, I am your humble servant, and all that, Madam") gave the only performance that would pass muster in a production that genuinely attempted to do justice to the play; but Judd Hirsch, who played Justice Balance as an old Jewish wise guy, was very funny, and some of the others not bad. Bissinger spoke to me about a production he was planning that would not be "hampered with a script"; if only he had not been "hampered" with *The Recruiting Officer*—if only he had found, or evolved, something that he and his actors were comfortable with, something perhaps that really said what he and the company wanted to say about the war, or about War—there might have been better news from Philadelphia than I have in fact been able to bring. □

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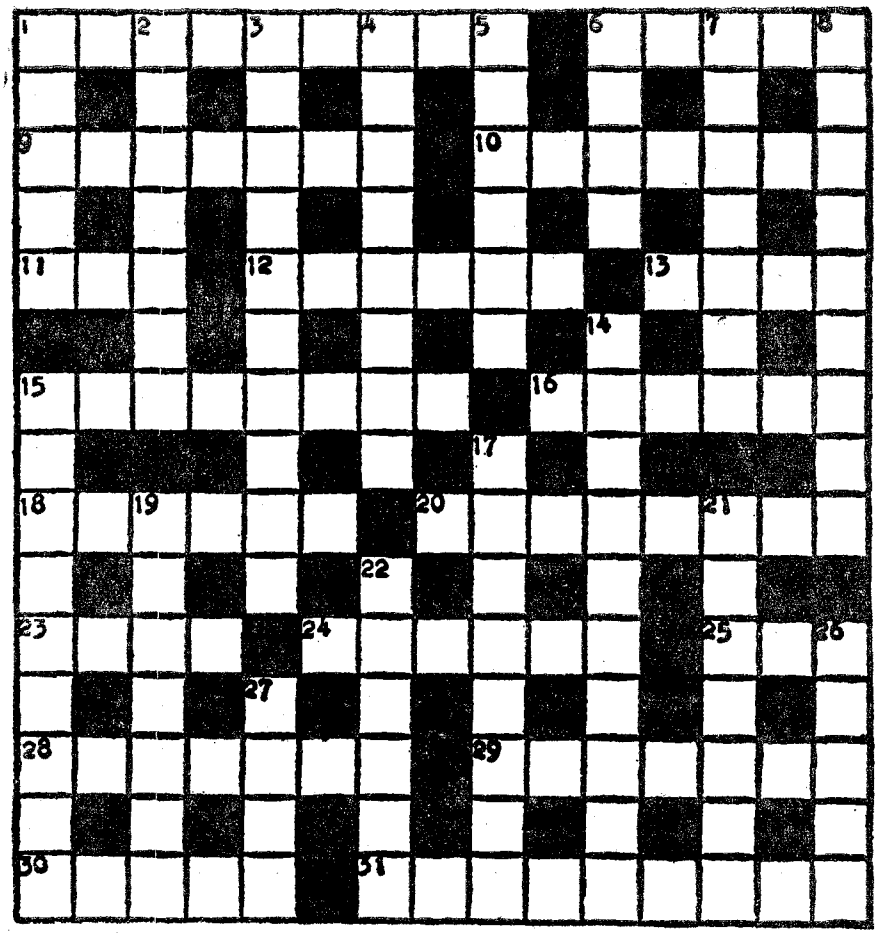

ACROSS

1 Object, perhaps, to mails being kicked over? (4,5)
6 Usually, m.p.h. reached shows what's in your blood. (5)
9 Floor number in short, possibly deserted. (7)
10 More shaken after the proposition? (7)
11 See 25
12 A bird so improperly headed still gets its victim. (6)
13 Soon this might be unknown in its longer version. (4)
15 Doesn't stick to 30. (8)
16 A jester is the merry type! (6)
18 Such things as both old men and young men might want to keep out of? (6)
20 Many roll such a combination, usually.
24 When they do the troops, they don't necessarily improve their morals. (6)
25, 28 and 7 down Would he only have a .333 fielding average? (3,7,7)
25, 15 down, 25 and 11 across Might be the subtitle of the clue above, but by 8 rather than 31. (3,3,3,3,3,3,)
28 See 25
29 Cut out and gave food around which was obviously brought. (7)
30 Fares, but not too well! (5)
31 See 25 (9)

DOWN

1 Hooks that hold the catch. (5)
2 A craft that doesn't go quietly may take this. (3,4)
3 Those in favor of making a non-stopper?
4 If you're expecting other than a noisy reception, you might hope they don't appear. (8)
5 One might tend to be this, as a poser.
6 To tell the truth, one hasn't sung in Berlin! (4)
8 See 25 (9)
14 Just to show you how hard it blows! (10)
15 See 25
17 The spectrum should be. (8)
19 As an example, 25 might be in the paper. (7)
21 When something is, there's probably a catch to it. (7)
22 Characteristic of a poisoned condition, suggesting it belongs to the family? (6)
26 Provide with some power of the type expected? (5)
27 and 23 across Probably poor farmers take vegetables to some in the community. (8)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1332

ACROSS: 1 High-tension line; 9 Vitamin; 10 Evens up; 11 No news; 12 Call down; 14 Washstands; 17 Nays; 19 Astronomic; 22 Educator; 23 Fall to; 25 Freesia; 26 Omicron; 27 Lee's Lieutenants. DOWN: 1,3, 18 and 15 Having wonderful time, wish you were here; 2 and 24 Get one's goat; 4 Nina; 5 Icelanders; 6 Needle; 7 In store; 8 Expense accounts; 13 Passionate; 16 Invasion; 20 Mile run; 21 Vassal.

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